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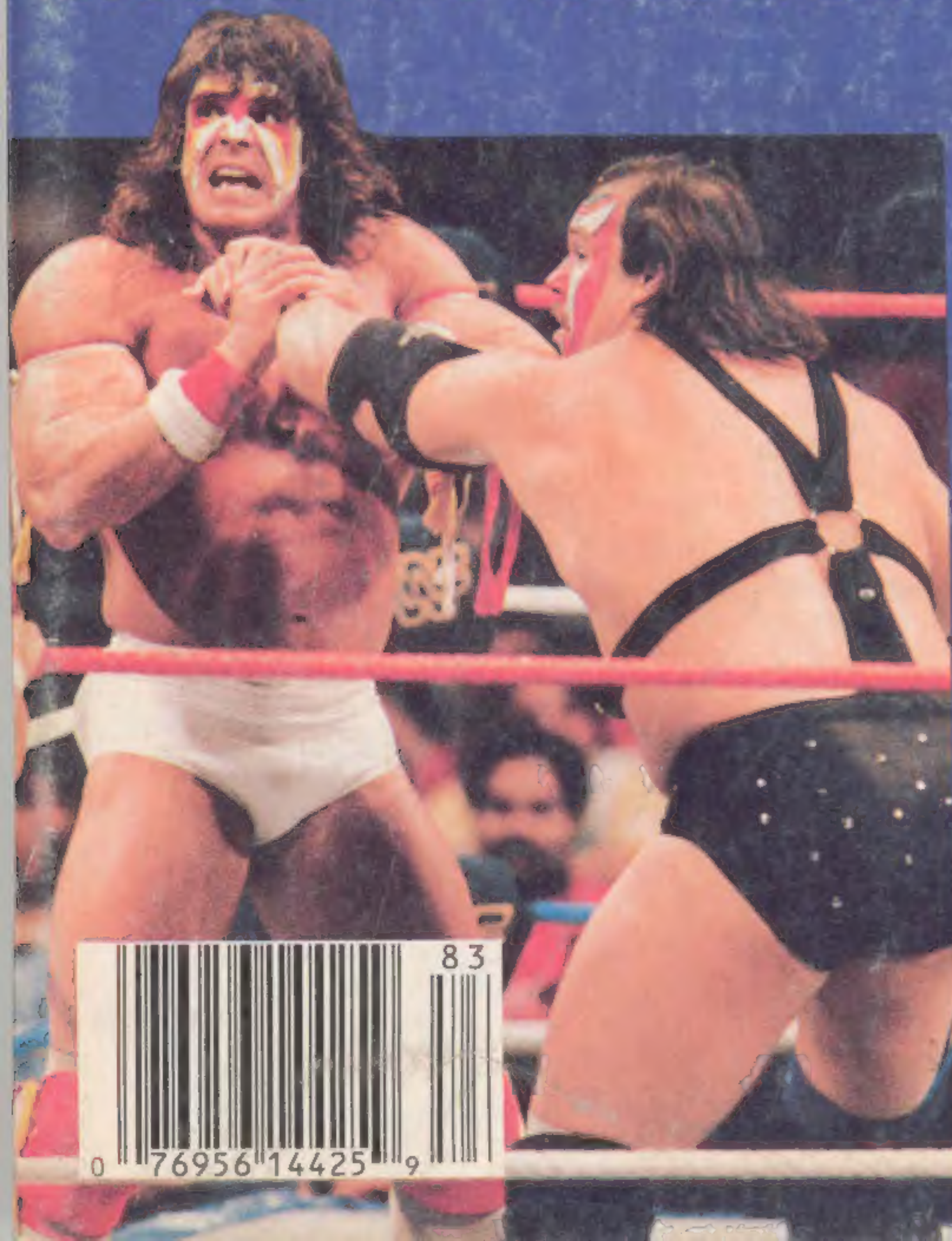
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# Victory Sports Wrestling

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His Herculean  
Task Accomplished. . .  
**THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR  
MUSCLES INTO CONTENTION**



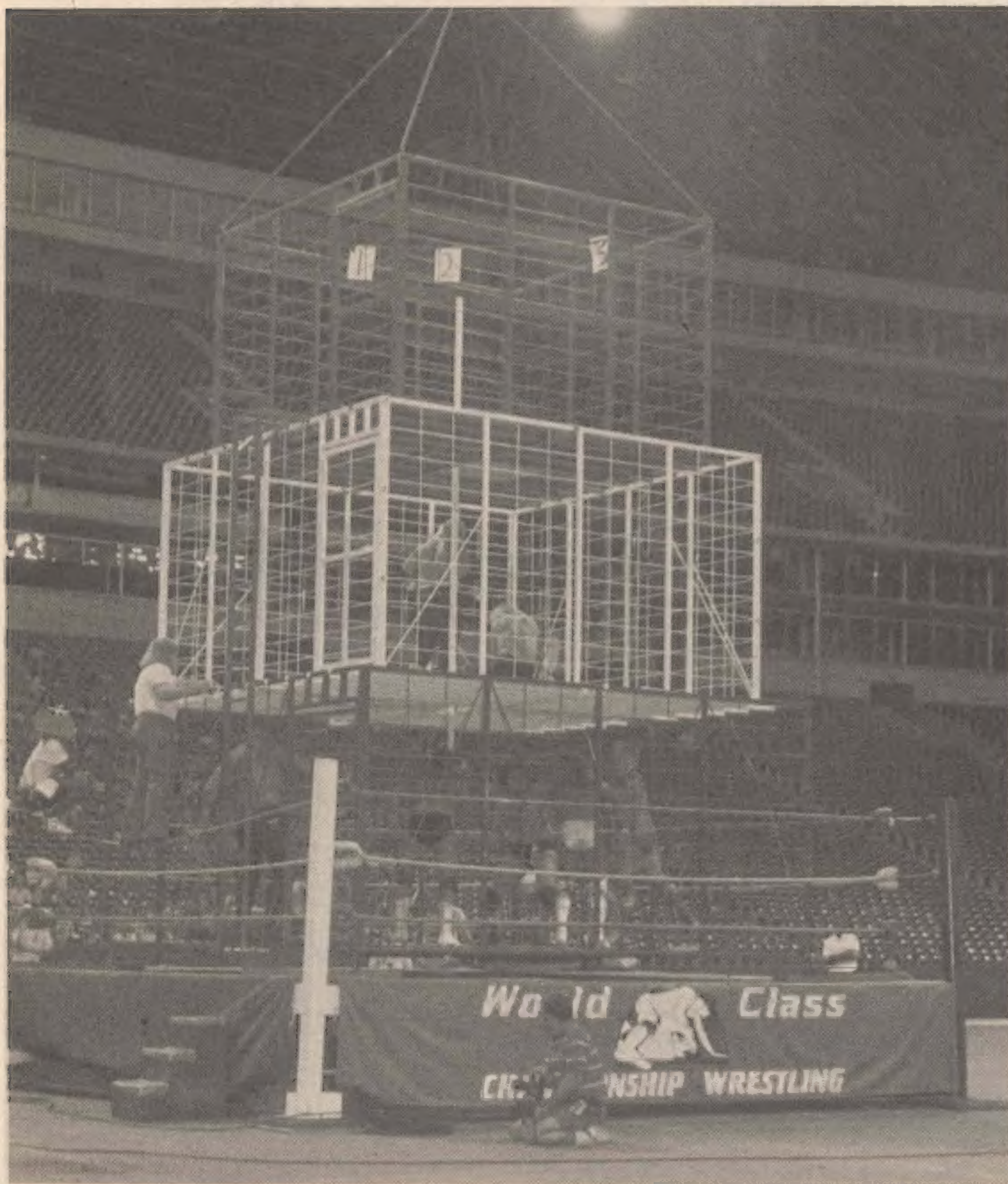
# WHAT RANDY SAVAGE MUST DO TO ESCAPE THE SHADOW OF HULK HOGAN





# READER

## Response



*The Triple Dome of Terror is hailed by fans, like reader David Henkin, as an exciting innovation in wrestling action, but condemned by reader Kenny Dinkin and others as a brutal and unnecessary addition to the sport.*

### THE DOME DEBATE

I'm writing to detail my disgust for the Triple Dome of Terror that has become popular in the World Class area and in the NWA as the Tower of Doom. I see it as a trend not only in wrestling, but in the entire world of sports. At baseball games, fans quickly become bored unless there are mu-

sic videos and loud organ music to distract them during the between-innings intermission. No longer do fans cheer spontaneously about the action on the field unless an electronic message tells them to. It's disgusting.

The same thing is happening in wrestling with this Triple Dome business. Do the promoters actu-

ally think all this flashiness is what the fans come out to see? Time was when you went to the matches to see two men go at it. Now, the entire idea of straight wrestling has become diluted by this triple monstrosity. Why can't two guys just get in a ring and wrestle? That's the action I used to love.

DAVID HENKIN  
New York

I must tell you that I greatly enjoy any matches that take place in World Class' new Triple Dome of Terror. Some fans may say that there is too much action and not enough scientific grappling, but I've always said that if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen!

The Triple Dome provides wrestlers with the ultimate setting for their feuds. The mere fact that there is nowhere to run and nowhere to hide means that some serious battling is going to take place. And what fan doesn't want to see some serious battling?

I've always enjoyed cage matches because you're sure to see fine wrestling, but the Triple Dome adds something else: Not only do you have to battle your opponents, but you have to battle the cage as well! That's the test of a champion!

All in all, I find the Triple Dome of Terror extremely exciting and I welcome all matches within it.

KENNY DINKIN  
Dallas

### GREAT AMERICAN HOAX

I don't know about you, but I think the NWA's "Great American Bash" tour is one big hoax. What the Bashes give us is the chance to see the NWA's singles titlists wrestling either in tag teams or in War Games situations, neither of which will result in a title change.

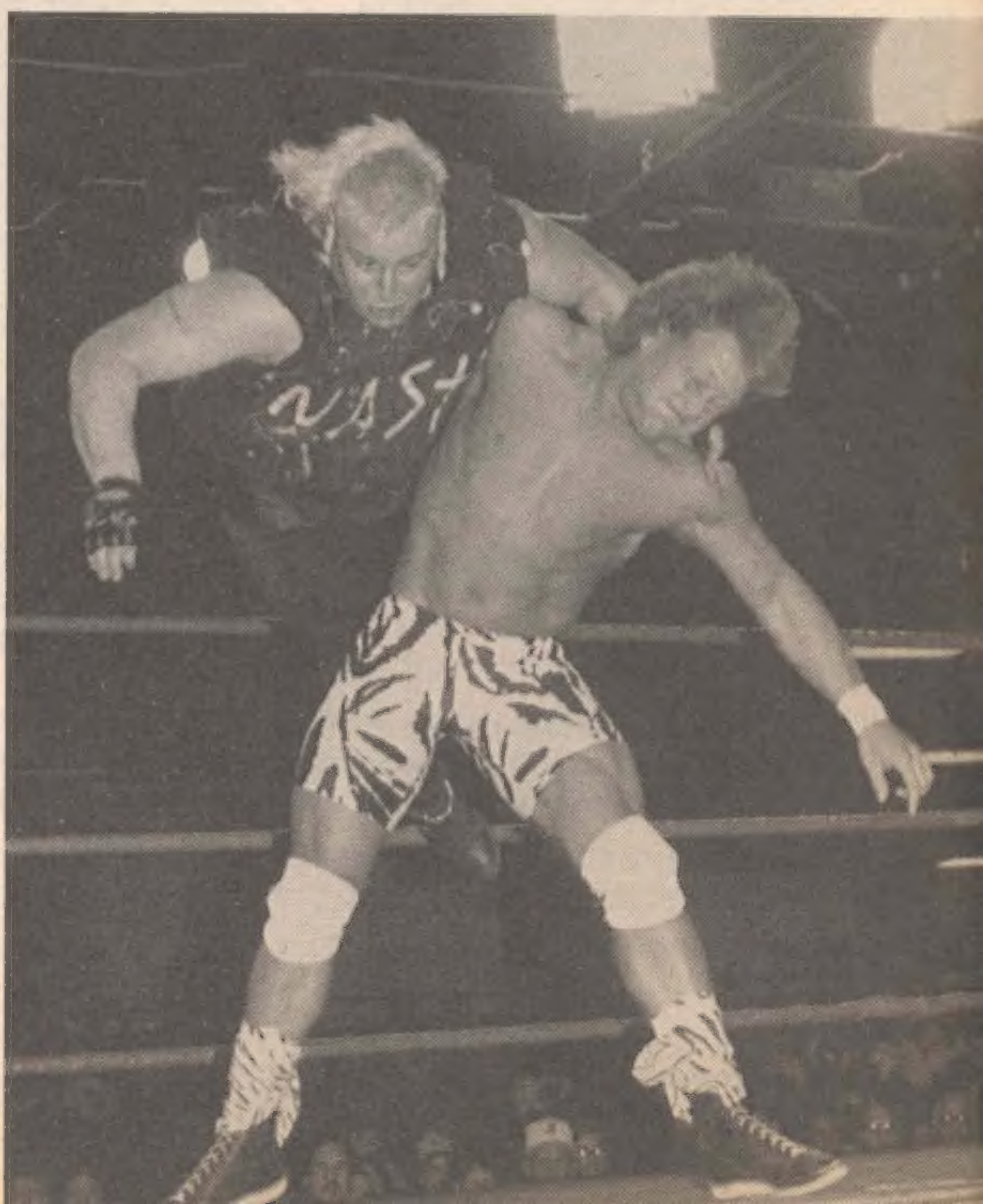
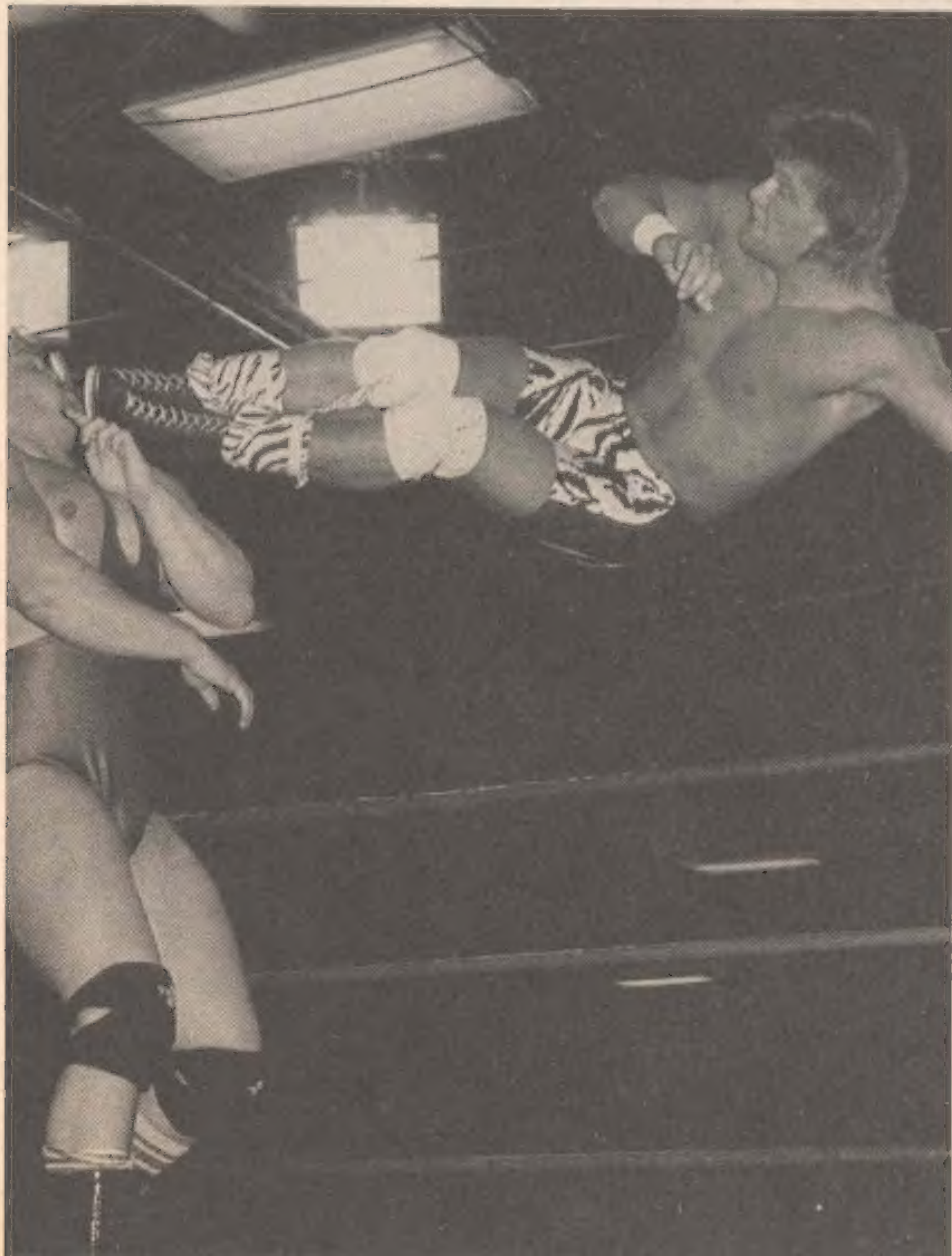
How much longer will the NWA allow Ric Flair and Barry Wind-  
*(Continued on page 46)*



# Introducing Ricky Rice

Despite rumors to the contrary, aerial skills are alive and well in the AWA—thanks to the emergence of young Ricky Rice, who soars over more experienced competition with unmatched grace

*Ricky Rice's dropkicks—his specialty—have tremendous height and accuracy (below left). Rice hiptosses "Nasty Boy" Brian Knobbs (below right). Rice has risen quickly in the ranks of the AWA.*



“DON'T ASK ME to explain it,” shrugs Ricky Rice, “I’ve been blessed with good jumping ability. The ways things have been going, I feel really fortunate. I guess I’m just lucky.”

Rice's true luck is that he doesn't have to face himself in the ring. This handsome young star has surprised wrestling observers by defeating the majority of his opponents during his rookie foray in the AWA. Rice boasts a unique blend of science, speed, and maturity that has enabled him to amass an impressive won-loss record—and crack the AWA top 10 after only six months in the federation!

Though only a pro for less than a year, he already ranks among the small group of active competitors who are experts in a maneuver that is becoming a lost art—the flying dropkick. Many critics claim his version is the best they've seen in the federation since Jim Brunzell's in the early '70s.

Rice can credit much of his

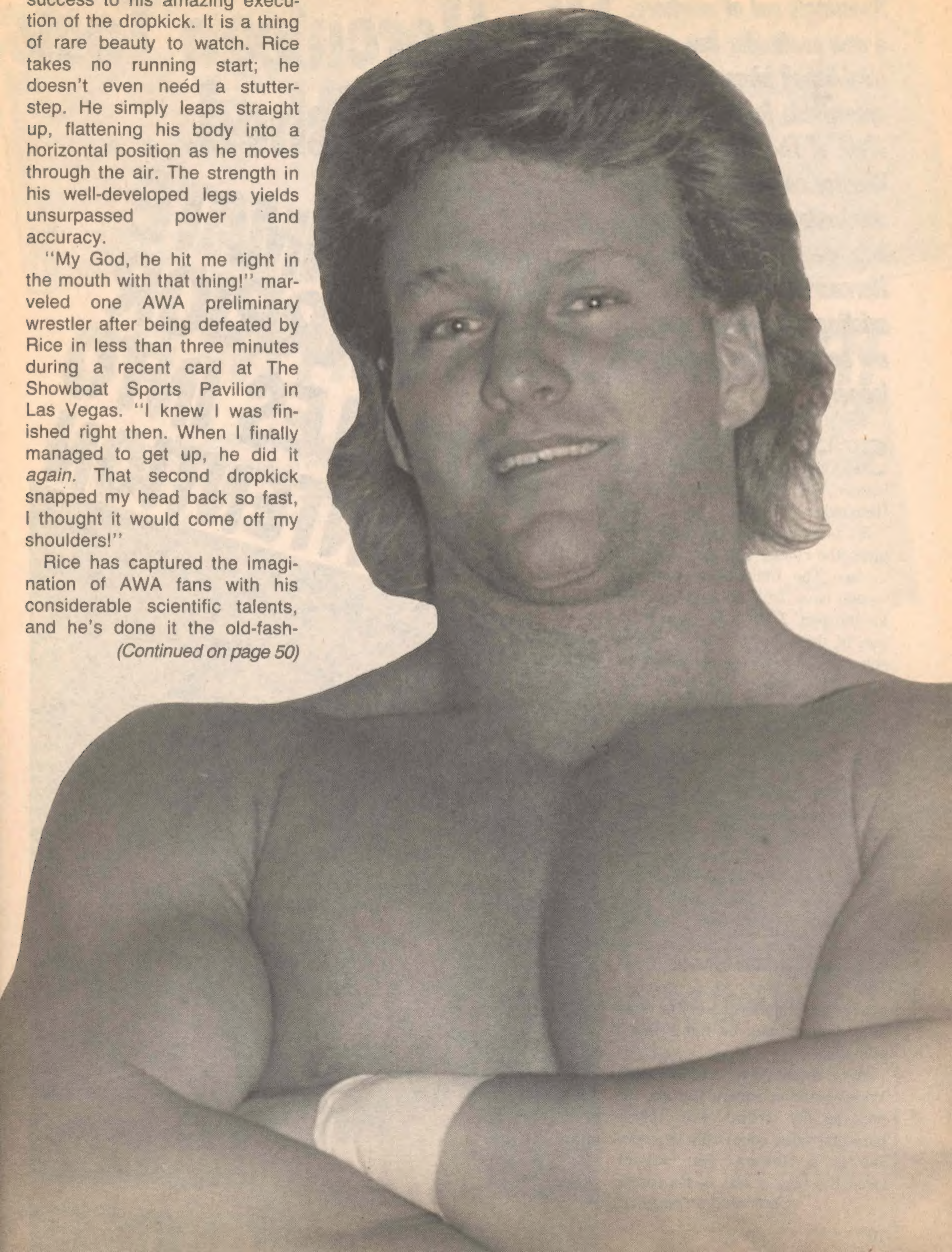


success to his amazing execution of the dropkick. It is a thing of rare beauty to watch. Rice takes no running start; he doesn't even need a stutter-step. He simply leaps straight up, flattening his body into a horizontal position as he moves through the air. The strength in his well-developed legs yields unsurpassed power and accuracy.

"My God, he hit me right in the mouth with that thing!" marveled one AWA preliminary wrestler after being defeated by Rice in less than three minutes during a recent card at The Showboat Sports Pavilion in Las Vegas. "I knew I was finished right then. When I finally managed to get up, he did it *again*. That second dropkick snapped my head back so fast, I thought it would come off my shoulders!"

Rice has captured the imagination of AWA fans with his considerable scientific talents, and he's done it the old-fash-

*(Continued on page 50)*





*Seemingly out of nowhere, a new contender has established himself as an unbeatable force in the WWF. If The Ultimate Warrior continues to dominate his foes the way he's mastered Hercules Hernandez, the WWF's existing titleholders may not be champions much longer*

SOMETIMES, THE HARDEST lessons in life are the ones learned too late. Just ask Hercules Hernandez.

Six months ago, if Hercules were given the chance to sign a contract to face The Ultimate Warrior, he would have laughed and reached for the pen. Today, the very mention of the Warrior's name reportedly makes Hercules cringe in terror. The Ultimate Warrior, the war-painted youngster with the unmatched physique, has become one of the most feared men in the WWF.

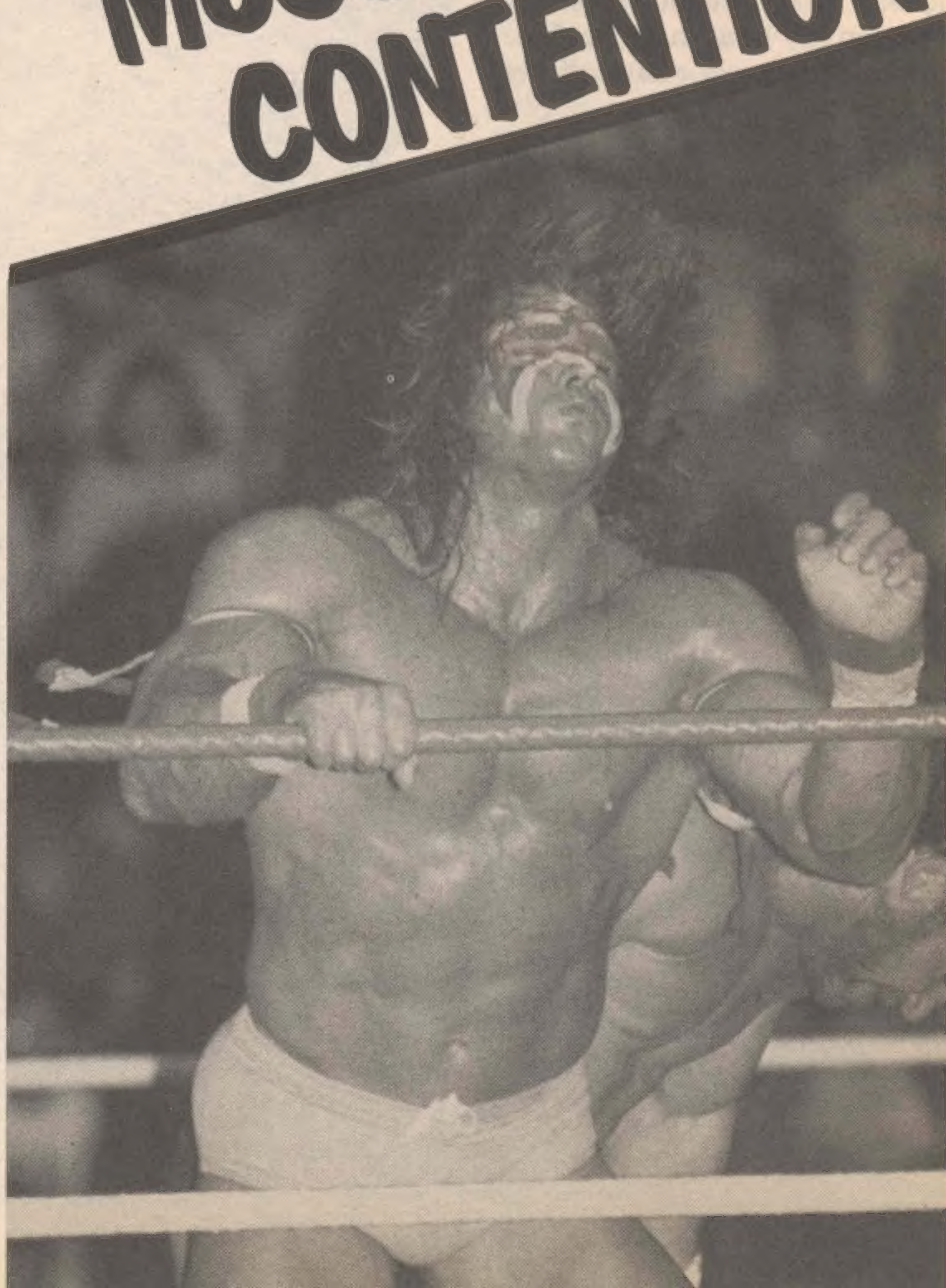
Unfortunately for Hercules, he learned to respect Warrior too late, and the result was an aching body and plenty of checkmarks in the loss column. The Warrior's dominance over the veteran—and most of the other wrestlers he has faced—has sounded a clear message to WWF titleholders: Don't sign your name to a contract against this man, because your days as champion may be numbered if you do!

At a recent WWF card in New York's Madison Square Garden, the near-capacity crowd was unprepared for what could only be classified as a blowout. The Warrior faced the biggest test of his career

*(Continued on page 12)*

# His Herculean Task Accomplished. . .

## THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR MUSCLES INTO CONTENTION





# ULTIMATE WARRIOR

(Continued from page 10)

as he faced the chain-bearing Hercules, who was seeking revenge from his controversial WrestleMania IV defeat at the hands of the Warrior.

Hercules shouldn't have forced the issue.

The result was an unexpected delight for the thousands of fans in attendance. Hercules, a man valued by Bobby Heenan as a proven troubleshooter for his stable, may as well have been a preliminary wrestler. The Warrior handled him with ease, tossing him about the ring with the kind of power that turns prospects into legends.

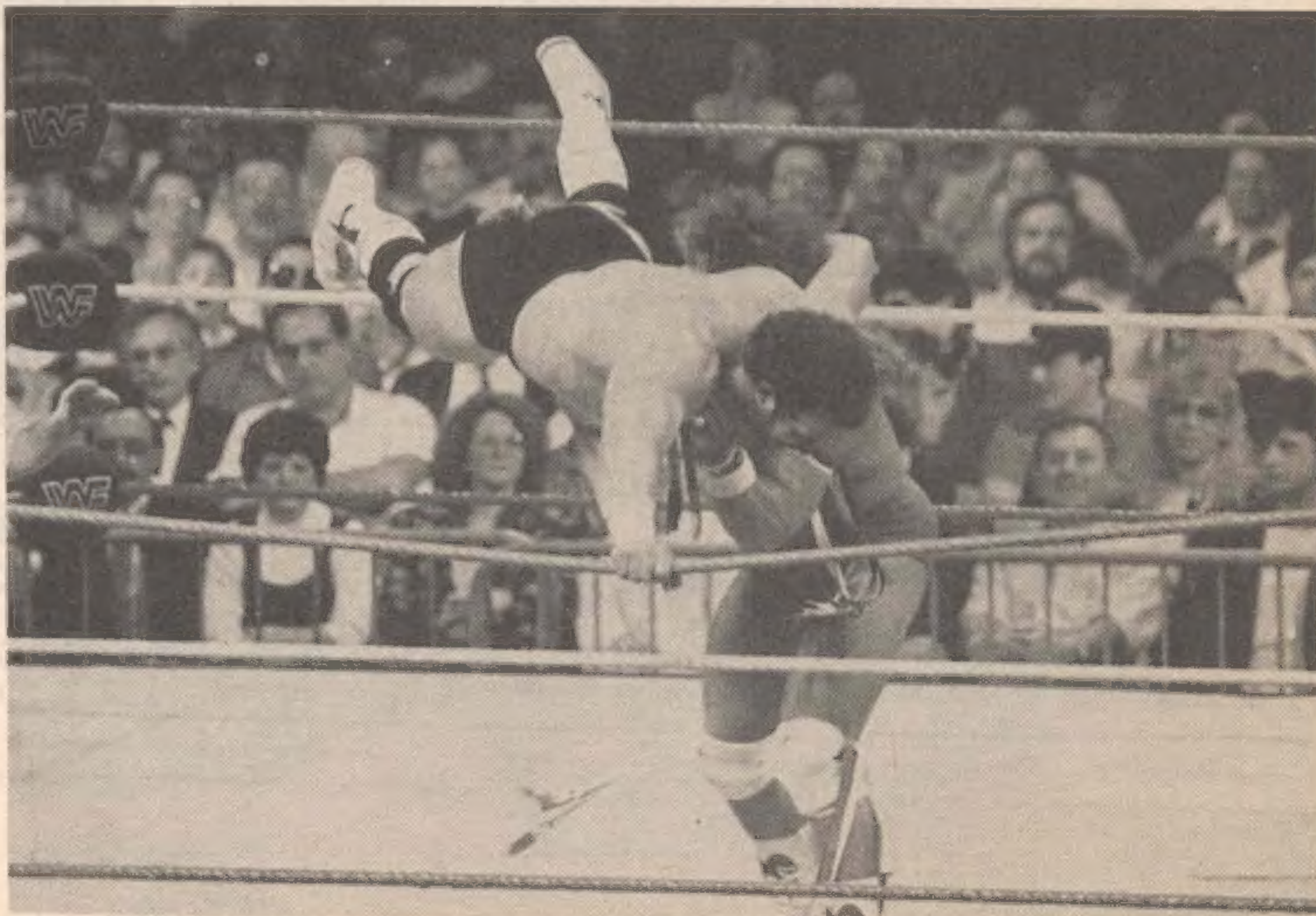
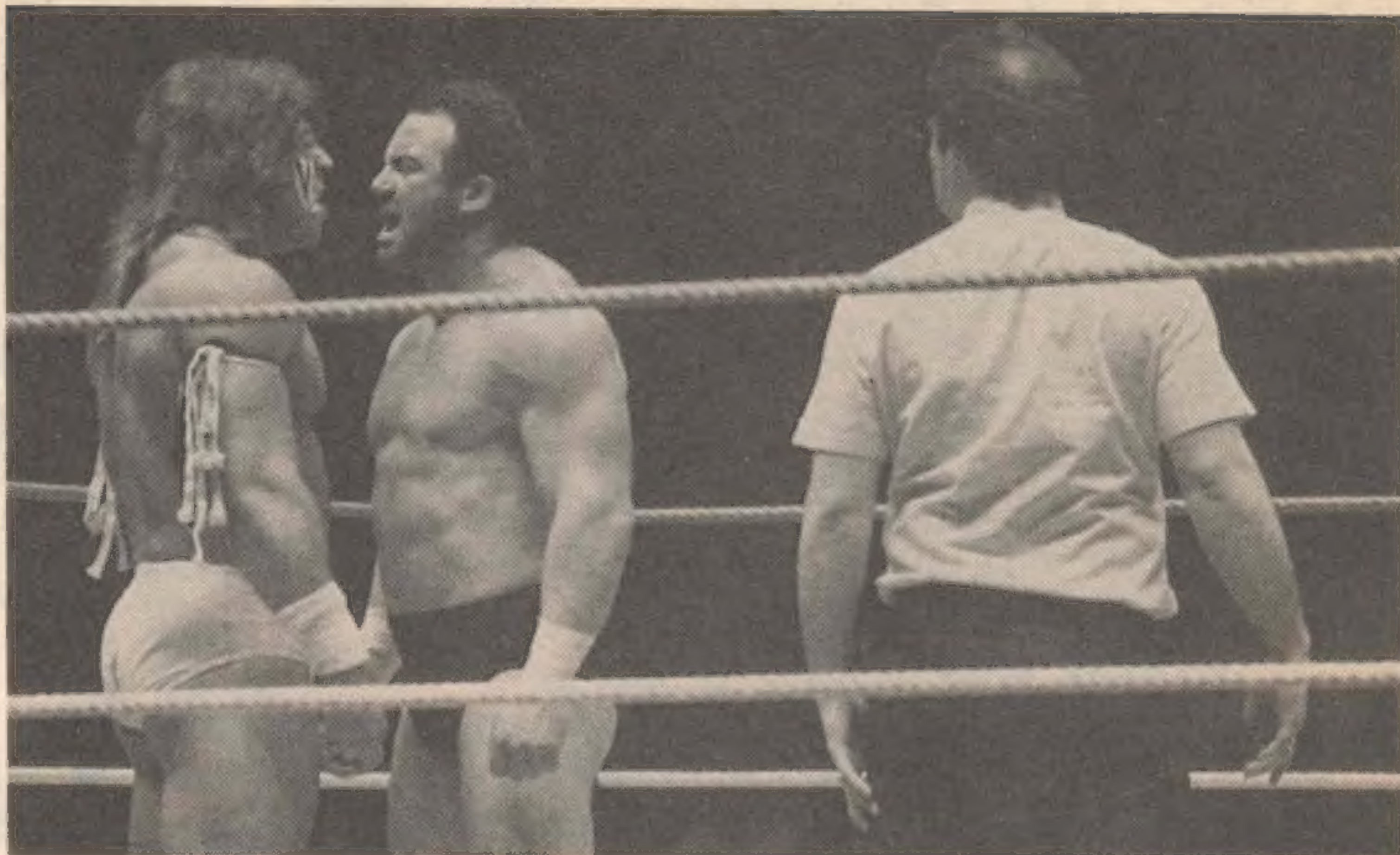
The bout ended when the Warrior gorilla-slammed Hercules and cleanly pinned him. It took the Tampa native several minutes to get up from this devastating maneuver. No one expected Hercules to be dominated during this bout, and the fans realized they were seeing a major new force coming to full bloom.

What makes the situation even more impressive is that Hercules was the second Heenan family member to feel the wrath of the Warrior's mountain of muscle. Previously, Harley Race, the self-proclaimed "King of Wrestling" and a seven-time NWA World champion, had been dominated in a series of matches against the Warrior.

The unblemished WWF record of The Ultimate Warrior is the direct result of his well-developed plan to become a major wrestling star. In a sport filled with competitors featuring egos to match their muscles, the Warrior chose an educated—and unlikely—path to success.

The Warrior began his career as one of the quartet of wrestlers known as Powerteam U.S.A. in late 1985. Soon after, he traveled to the UWF as one of The Blade Runners (he was billed as Rock) and teamed with another fledgling superstar by

(Continued on page 51)



The Ultimate Warrior and Hercules shout each other down in the center of the ring (top). Ultimate chops Hercules (center top) and drapes him over the ropes (above).



# Jerry Lawler's Wife Reveals:



Jerry Lawler and his wife Paula once dreamed about the day that "The King" would win a world title. But as Paula reveals in this *Victory Sports Wrestling* exclusive, life with the new AWA champion has been a nightmare



By Paula Lawler

**I** MUST ADMIT, when the editors of this magazine asked me to write an article about what it's like to be the wife of a world champion, I was a bit hesitant. Although Jerry and I are public figures because he's a wrestler and I'm his wife, we try to keep our private lives to ourselves. You can't give yourself away entirely, although Jerry and I do know a lot of people.

But I changed my mind a few days ago, and the reason may raise a few eyebrows. To put it very simply, I just can't understand the change that Jerry's undergone over the past few weeks. But I can pinpoint exactly when it started to happen: May 9, 1988. That's the night Jerry won the AWA World title, and in all honesty, that belt has turned my husband into a monster! Maybe my writing this will make him realize how he's acting.

Some people are going to read that and get the wrong idea, so let me explain: Jerry is the sweetest guy I've ever met (after all, I *did* marry him). He's kind, giving, considerate, he's got a great sense of humor, and he's very creative. And one of the best things about him is that when he's home, he never talks about wrestling. He's always had this great ability to separate his career from his personal life.



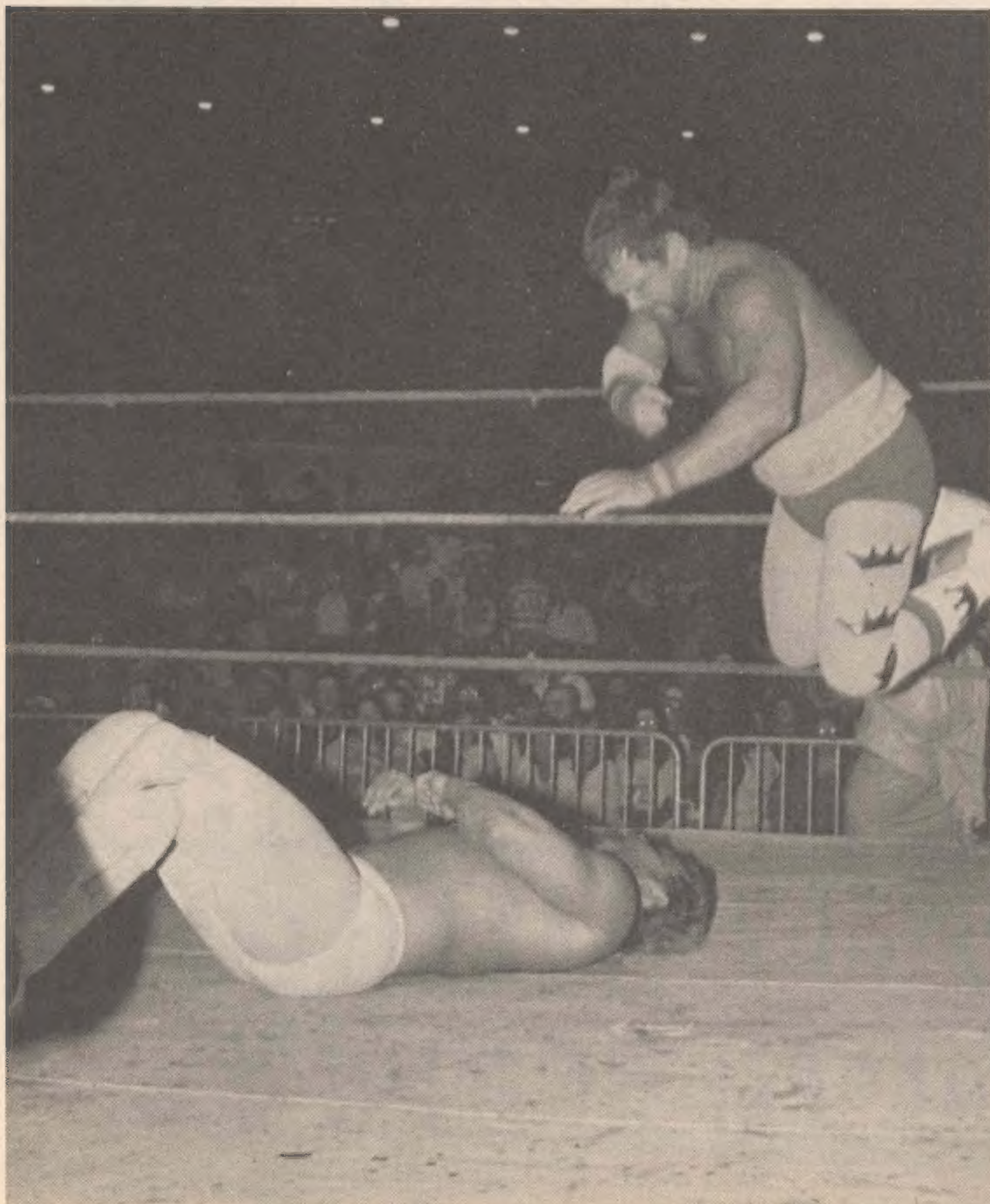
*The blood dripping from his face, Jerry Lawler punches Curt Hennig away and inadvertently knocks over referee Jackie Fargo. Lawler won the match and the AWA World title—his first world singles belt—after 21 intense minutes.*

**"THE AWA TITLE HAS  
TURNED MY HUSBAND  
INTO A MONSTER!"**





Fargo gives the prematch instructions (above). Lawler lets fly with a forearm smash (below). Paula Lawler has noticed changes in her husband ever since he won the title. She says he acts like he's the king of his house as well as the king of the ring. It's a side of him she doesn't like at all.



Until about a month ago.

I'll never forget it. The night Jerry won the belt from Curt Hennig, we got home from all the parties at about two in the morning. Usually, we'll go right to sleep at that hour, but this time Jerry went downstairs to the den and watched the tape of his match against Hennig again and again. Finally, at about 5:30, I went downstairs and saw Jerry just sitting there staring at the TV set, almost like he was in a daze. I said to him, "Honey, aren't you coming to bed?" and he just ignored me. Jerry never ignores me.

When I looked closer, I saw that he wasn't really staring at the TV set; his eyes were closed. I figured he was sleeping, so I turned off the TV and the VCR. Well, no sooner did I do that and he woke up and snapped, "Don't you ever do that again! When 'The King' is watching TV, nobody bothers him." I was shocked. I know that everybody calls Jerry "The King," but he's never referred to himself that way in front of me. I was angry. I was also confused.

A couple of days later, Jerry and I had Bill Dundee over for dinner. We've been friends with Bill for a long time, although he and Jerry  
(Continued on page 18)



## PAULA LAWLER

(Continued from page 16)

have gone through a couple of bad periods, and this was kind of a private celebration. We had dinner, watched a movie on the VCR, and just sat around talking all night. We had a great time, and Bill and Jerry really seemed to get along. In fact, they had a match coming up in a few days, just a friendly thing, and we had such a good time that I decided to go see Jerry and Bill wrestle.

Well, I wish I hadn't gone. Everything started off fine, but you could see that little by little they were getting madder at each other. Finally, they were just punching each other and suddenly—and I couldn't believe this!—Jerry reached into his trunks and pulled out some kind of weapon. A chain, I think. I wish I could have stopped him. He just started using it on Bill, really hurting him, and then finally got the pin. It was embarrassing. Bill's my friend, too, and I couldn't believe Jerry did that to him.

So I did something I've hardly ever done before. When we got home that night, I asked Jerry about the match. That was a *big* mistake. Jerry turned around,



Hennig takes a swing at "The King" (above left). Jeff Jarrett celebrates with Lawler as Hennig is left lying on the mat (above right).



Lawler backs Hennig into a corner. "The King" has been defending the AWA World heavyweight title in other federations, including World Class, where he fought World Class champion Kerry Von Erch in a belt vs. belt encounter.



pointed at me, and said, "Listen, Paula, what I do in that ring is my business. I got that belt now and Bill wanted it, so he's the enemy. I don't care if he's my friend, I don't care if he had dinner over our house. The way I see it, anybody who wants that belt is my enemy. I worked too long and too hard to get it, and I'm not just giving it up." All the time Jerry was saying this, his face was turning red and he was screaming louder and louder. I never saw him like that before in my life.

I wish I could say that things have gotten better since then, but they haven't. If anything, it's gotten worse. When Jerry's home, he just mopes around the house and doesn't say a word. I ask him

(Continued on page 52)



# THE BRAIN AND THE BRAWN:

## HOW BOBBY HEENAN REAWAKENED THE GIANT IN ANDRE

Many wrestling critics believed that Andre the Giant had reached the nadir of his career. Hacksaw Duggan even managed to knock him out. Suddenly, Bobby Heenan was back on the scene. Now, the only kayos are being scored by Andre

By Bob Smith



*You're suddenly awake. Your body throbs, but you can't move. Your eyes won't focus, but you see lights as bright as the sun. You hear the collective voices of a multitude of people. You smell beer and popcorn. Your legs feel like they are made of lead. Your head aches in a way that it never has before. As your eyes begin to focus, you realize you are being watched by others—thousands of others. Your pupils focus on faces that peer down at you; they are people you don't recognize. You realize you are in a wrestling ring. Leaping to your feet, you lash out at those around you, throwing them from your sight one by one, trying to crush them. The multitude around you is hostile, calling out your name in hatred. You are embarrassed over what has happened to you. You realize you are all alone. You realize you need help. You will never let this happen to you again.*

*You are going to reach back into your past to insure your future.*





**J**IM DUGGAN KNOWS not what he has wrought.

When the wrestler known as "Hacksaw" belted Andre the Giant over the head with his 2x4, he did much more than just gain a momentary advantage over a larger opponent. What Duggan actually accomplished is now being felt by competitors throughout the World Wrestling Federation, thanks mainly to the influence of Bobby Heenan.

By knocking Andre out—only the second time in his career this has happened—Duggan only managed to symbolically wake Andre up, at least enough to realize that he needed the guiding hand of Heenan, his former manager, to look after his affairs once again. Heenan's been smiling ever since. Andre's been awesome ever since.

Those who know Heenan realize that he'll keep the memory of the Andre-Duggan incident alive in Andre's mind as long as he needs

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*Wrestling as viciously as he ever has, Andre the Giant shoves Randy Savage into the ropes (left) and chokes Hulk Hogan (below). The Giant regained his fighting spirit when Bobby Heenan started managing him again.*







*Andre readies Bam Bam Bigelow for a headbutt (left). He seems to enjoy punishing Bigelow (bottom left). When he was on a mission from Ted DiBiase, Andre was not in control. Now he has his own plans for wrestling domination.*



to rekindle the killer instinct in the aging giant. No one is better than Heenan when it comes to instilling self-confidence—if not downright evil—in the men who have been fortunate enough to be called members of his elite stable.

The past several months have been ones of personal and professional turmoil for Andre. When Heenan sold Andre's contract to Ted DiBiase several months before WrestleMania IV, it was for more money than either Heenan or Andre ever made on a single transaction in their careers. Who could resist being financially comfortable for the rest of his life? Even winning the WWF title and being forced to abandon it would be worth the price.

Though Andre agreed to the transaction knowing full well that he was being used by DiBiase, he was a happy man. Money has a way of doing that for some people. Even when the moment came, when his lifelong dream was fulfilled and he won the WWF World title from Hulk Hogan on February 5 in Indianapolis, he handed it to DiBiase without a moment's thought. In spite of the questionable circumstances of his victory, Andre considered himself a man of honor. He would not renege on his agreement with his new manager.

Of course, neither he nor DiBiase figured on the forthcoming decision by Jack Tunney. The WWF president declared the title vacant and set up a championship tournament at WrestleMania IV. And while Andre did his best to help DiBiase out in his final-round match against Randy Savage, his efforts were offset by the overwhelming presence of Hulk Hogan. After all was said and done, after the contracts were secured and the referees bought, after taking the title from the man





*The Giant digs his fingers into Hacksaw Duggan's midsection (left), pushes Hacksaw's throat onto the top rope (top left), and chokes him (above). Their feud has proved that Andre is not finished as a serious contender.*

who had dominated his federation for four years, all had gone for naught. Andre's pact with DiBiase was effectively voided. They were of no use to each other anymore.

No longer under contract to Heenan or DiBiase, Andre was, for all intents and purposes, completely

alone. When you're alone, criticisms not only hurt, but they dig into the soul. And the criticisms started coming in droves: Andre is past his prime. It's time to retire. He's too old. The loss of his fans has robbed him of his competitive spirit.

The incident with Hacksaw Dug-

gan March 9 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, did much to open Andre's eyes to the realities of his future. Andre had just defeated a preliminary wrestler when Duggan charged the ring and challenged the Giant to a match. At first, Andre laughed, but then he headbutted Duggan in the mouth, splitting his lower lip. Andre kept butting Duggan and wrapped the ringlet of his tights around Duggan's throat.

Duggan could feel himself losing blood and consciousness. As he sunk to the mat, he reached for the piece of wood he calls his "enforcer." As Andre attempted to butt him once more, Duggan brought the wood down over Andre's skull. The Giant fell to the mat in a heap.

Andre remained motionless for about 10 minutes. WWF officials and medical personnel rushed to the ring to tend to the sleeping giant. The fans, not used to seeing Andre unconscious, responded with a strange silence as the medics hovered around the unmoving 500-pound carcass.

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# KERRY VON ERICH



**"I HAVE MY DOUBTS  
ABOUT MICHAEL HAYES!"**



**S**PORTSMEN BECOME legends by overcoming great obstacles to obtain victory. Somehow, Kerry Von Erich does it again and again. Overcoming crippling injuries suffered in a motorcycle accident almost two years ago, "The Modern-Day Warrior" has rebounded to win the World Class heavyweight title not once, but twice, with the latest triumph coming May 8 against Iceman Parsons at the fifth annual Von Erich Parade of Champions in Irving, Texas.

It was sweet revenge for Kerry, as Parsons and his Freebird friends, Buddy Roberts and Terry Gordy, had conspired to end Von Erich's title tenure in the midst of unprecedented controversy. The lights went out during a match between Von Erich and Parsons on March 25 at The Sportatorium in Dallas. When the lights came back on, Von Erich was out cold in the middle of the ring and Michael Hayes, who



had been at ringside, was lying in a pool of blood. Parsons laughed and pinned Von Erich to become the new World Class champion.

Von Erich, bolstered by the support of his brother Kevin and newfound friend Michael Hayes, began to train as never before. He realized that to beat Parsons for the title he had to be prepared for any situation. The over-matched Parsons put up a valiant struggle during the May 8 bout, but it was Von Erich who captured the winning pin.

Assistant Editor Bob Smith flew to Dallas and talked with Von Erich about his family, Hayes, The Freebirds, the fans, his health, and his championship.

**Q:** Kerry, congratulations on winning back the World Class title with your victory at the Parade of Champions! You've been an inspiration to fans all over the world the past few months.

**A:** Thanks, Bob. As always, I couldn't have done it without the support of those fans, or without the support of my family and the Good Lord above. This time was the most satisfying of all my title victories, I think, even more so than when I beat [Ric] Flair in '84. I had to put up with so much from not only Parsons, but from Roberts and Gordy, who were responsible for my losing the title in that "lights out" match. It tested my faith, but I came out on top.

**Q:** Parsons, along with Terry Gordy, Angel of Death, and Buddy Roberts, were also responsible for putting your father in the hospital on Christmas Day when they attacked him before your match with then-champion Al Perez. You have now won your title back, and several months have gone by since Fritz was injured. Has time mellowed your attitude toward these wrestlers?

**A:** That's an interesting question. First of all, I want all the fans to know that even after all they've done to me and my family, I don't hate those guys. The Bible tells us not



*Kerry slugs it out with Gordy (above). Hayes comforts Kerry after he was knocked cold by Iceman Parsons (below).*



to live with hatred in your heart, and that's something I try to remember. With men like these around, though, it takes hard work to keep a clear head. They obviously tried to hurt my dad. They were the ones behind my losing the title to Parsons. It was obvious that Gordy and Black Bart engineered that idiocy when the lights went out at The Sportatorium. Thanks to my upbringing, I managed to show them all the error of their ways by winning the title back cleanly. Even after all they've done, I'm still the champion. They'll learn the error of their ways in the long run, just like Michael Hayes did.

*(Continued on page 56)*



# WHAT RANDY SAVAGE MUST DO TO ESCAPE THE SHADOW OF HULK HOGAN

By Dave Rosenbaum

WHEN RANDY SAVAGE, after years as one of the most hated men in wrestling, made his stunning change from rulebreaker to fan favorite, Hulk Hogan was there. When Ted DiBiase, Virgil, and Andre the Giant attacked Savage on *Saturday Night's Main Event*, Hogan was there. And when the "Macho Man" won the WWF's World title tournament at WrestleMania IV, Hogan was there 'once again.

It seems like Randy Savage can't do anything without Hogan there to help him.

Certainly, that's the impression one gets from watching the incredible events that have marked the past year of Savage's career.

In the first instance, Savage was being brutally attacked by The Honky Tonk Man when Elizabeth ran back to the dressing room and emerged with "The Hulkster." Hogan not only saved Savage from serious injury, he assured that Savage would be cheered by the fans for some time to come. In the second instance, Savage was in danger of suffering a serious injury that could have forced him out of the title tour-





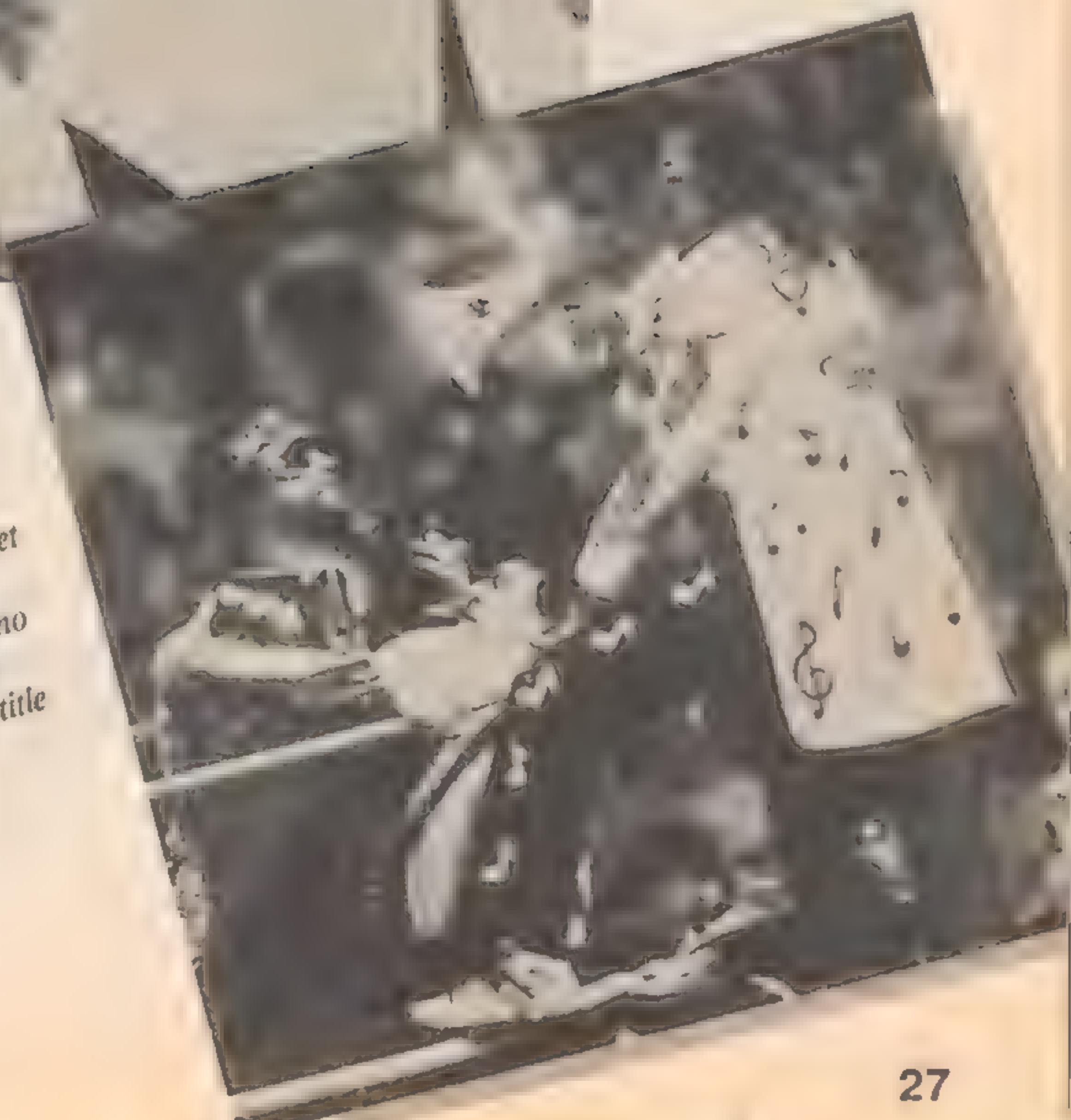
# TRUMP



*Hulk Hogan and Savage mug for the cameras at the press conference following Savage's World title victory at WrestleMania IV (left). Elizabeth has led the "Macho Man" to many important wins.*

**For over four years, Hulk Hogan ruled the WWF and, some say, all of wrestling. Now that Randy Savage is World champion, can he escape from the giant shadow that is cast by "The Hulkster's" legend?**

WWF World champion Randy Savage aims a kick at Andre the Giant (opposite page). Savage goes over the referee to get at Jimmy Hart (right). The "Macho Man" has fought hard to keep his title reign going.







*The Honky Tonk Man threatens Savage with his guitar. Despite an obvious advantage in skill, the "Macho Man" was unable to wrest the Intercontinental title from the arrogant Tennessean.*

nament, but Hogan saved the day. Finally, at the tournament, Hogan's outside interference led to Savage's victory.

Each time, Hogan came to the aid of a friend in need. Each time, Savage was grateful for Hogan's interference.

But maybe Savage would have been better off if he had absorbed a more brutal beating at Honky Tonk's hands. Maybe he could have fought his way out of trouble when DiBiase, Virgil, and Andre attacked him. And maybe he would have somehow escaped from DiBiase's sleeperhold

and gone on to win the World championship.

Maybe.

If so, Savage could have shown that he can get out of trouble on his own. That way, he wouldn't have been overshadowed by Hogan. Unfortunately, that's not the case. Randy Savage can't escape the shadow of Hulk Hogan, and in the eyes of most fans, the "Macho Man" isn't *really* the World champion. He's just holding Hogan's belt for a while.

An informal *Inside Wrestling* poll at a recent WWF card in Madison Square Garden showed this to be the impression of most fans. When the "Macho Man's" fans were asked why they like him, over 85 percent said it was because Hogan took him under his wing. When asked whether Savage could have won the belt without Hogan's interference, nearly 75 percent said "no." And 94 percent said Savage wouldn't be a better champion than Hogan.

"I'd much rather Hogan was the champion, but if he couldn't win, Savage was my second choice," said Josh Bernstein of Brooklyn, New

*(Continued on page 60)*



*Savage looks to throw Ted DiBiase out of the ring. DiBiase, the "Million-Dollar Man," has been Savage's most persistent challenger. Some of their matches have been classics, with Savage always wearing the belt at the end of the night.*



# MISSY HYATT: Queen For A Day For The King!



By Matt Brock

**I**'VE NEVER BEEN married. Oh, I've had offers, but I've always managed to escape in time. It's not something I regret; it's just the way I am.

I subscribe to the traditional view that a woman's place is in the home. Fortunately (for my marital status), this viewpoint is both unpopular and impractical in today's world, so I've been free to spend my time on the road reporting on the events that shape the wrestling world. I enjoy my freedom and haven't missed being tied down by marriage one bit.

Even if you don't believe that a woman's place is home wearing a



*Missy Hyatt pouts because Jerry Lawler is making her do some hard work (top left). The last thing she wants to do is touch "The King's" dirty laundry (above). Missy was being forced to serve as Lawler's valet for a day.*



**By winning a recent match against bounty hunter Robert Fuller, Jerry Lawler earned the services of Missy Hyatt as his maid for a day. Matt Brock was there to chronicle a most unusual day in "The King's" palace!**



Lawler watches to see that Missy polishes his boots properly (top left). "You want me to clean the bathroom?" Missy says (top right), "with this?" (above). Matt Brock, who witnessed Missy's agony, was hoping she'd learn a lesson.

kitchen apron, you must agree that her place is nowhere near a *ring* apron, working as a useless valet to some pretty-boy in sequins. I have no patience for the likes of Sunshine, Precious, Baby Doll, or even Elizabeth, whose main contribution to wrestling seems to be flashing a little leg. The queen of valets is undoubtedly Missy Hyatt, and there is no other valet that I despise more.

By the provisions of a contract for a recent Memphis match between Lawler and Robert Fuller (Eddie Gilbert's latest bounty hunter in his war against Lawler), the maid services of Missy Hyatt were up for grabs. "The King's" pinfall victory in that bout earned him a queen for a day—and the probability of a far cleaner home when the day was complete!

So when Jerry invited me down to Memphis to report on Hyatt's day as a maid, I was honored. After all, I was the only print reporter invited, and I'm not one to turn down a scoop. I told "The King" that there was nothing in the world that would keep me from the pleasure of watching Missy cleaning, scrubbing, and laundering every corner of the Lawler castle.

I recall a similar good time watching Jimmy Garvin and Sunshine toil as David Von Erich's farmhand in 1983. After a full day of fence building, stable-shoveling, and cow-milking, both Garvin and his valet left Von Erich's ranch a little humbler than when they arrived. Humility is something from which Missy Hyatt could surely benefit. If she didn't learn her lesson back in 1986 when she was Dark Journey's maid for a day, maybe a man could do so.

I arrived promptly at nine o'clock in the morning and was helped out of my rental car by Missy. She was wearing a dirty apron, indicating that her day as Lawler's maid began early. Jerry ran out to greet me.

*(Continued on page 62)*



Promoters are constantly coming up with new ways to test wrestlers and excite fans. But World Class officials may have gone too far with the Triple Dome of Terror, wrestling's superstacked triplex of horror and violence that had even the bravest men crying, "Enough!"

IT'S WITHOUT A doubt the strangest looking contraption you've ever seen in—or on—or around!—a wrestling ring.

"It almost looks like a wedding cake," said World Class referee Rick Hazzard, "but without the smiling bride and groom on top." By the time a wrestler reaches the top of the Triple Dome of Terror, he's usually beaten and torn apart. Wrestling's most dangerous match is certainly no honeymoon.

"I got to the top and I looked down," said Steve Casey, who was the first man to reach the uppermost cage in The Texas Roundup, held at Texas Stadium in Dallas as part of the fifth annual Parade of Champions. "All I saw was a bunch of guys beating the heck out of each other and I said to myself, 'I survived that?' I'm glad I don't have to go back down there."

Below Casey were two more caged rings, connected only by a fireman's pole running through a hole cut in the middle of each. The

# Wrestling's Most



three rings, which decreased in size from bottom to top, were placed on top of the standard wrestling ring. There were trap doors between

each ring, but the doors to the outside were locked, allowing a wrestler no way out. You could go up, or you could go down, but you



# Dangerous Match Ever:

## THE TRIPL DOME OF TERROR!



*Terry Gordy cuts the hair of his former partner Buddy Roberts in the "Triple Dome of Terror," a visually exciting but markedly dangerous contraption that makes a regular cage match seem like a walk in the park.*

but only one man can go up at a time. Then you have the cage, which always causes trouble. But the worst part is that the cages get smaller and even the bottom cage is smaller than a regular wrestling ring. It just spells trouble."

And excitement for the fans, especially since The Texas Roundup rewarded not only the wrestlers, but the spectators, too. Before the match began, each of the 17 wrestlers involved drew the name of a fan in the stands. Three cards, each representing a different prize, were suspended from a string in the top cage. The first wrestler to reach the top won a trip to Las Vegas for his fan. Second and third prizes were a motorcycle and jewelry, respectively.

"Believe it or not," said John Tatum in an unusual moment of candor, "that made me try even harder. I usually don't give a crap about the fans, but there was

*(Continued on page 62)*

couldn't escape.

"The toughest match I've ever been involved in? I'd say so," said Jason Sterling, the second man to

reach the top. "Put it this way: You've got 17 men in a caged ring. Everybody's trying to go up, because that's the only way to win,



# FANS' OUTCRY

By Craig Peters

THE COLLECTIVE CRY of NWA fans is overwhelming in its intensity and crystal-clear in its meaning:

Bring The Rock 'n' Roll Express back to the NWA—now!

Back in the June 1988 issue of *Inside Wrestling*, we ran a story entitled, "Sign Our Petition: Bring The Rock 'n' Roll Express Back To The NWA!" Rick Morton and Robert Gibson had just left the federation, but the memories of their high-flying exploits, feuds, and four World title reigns were still fresh in the minds of the fans, over 30,000 of whom responded to the story by sending in the coupon provided in that magazine.

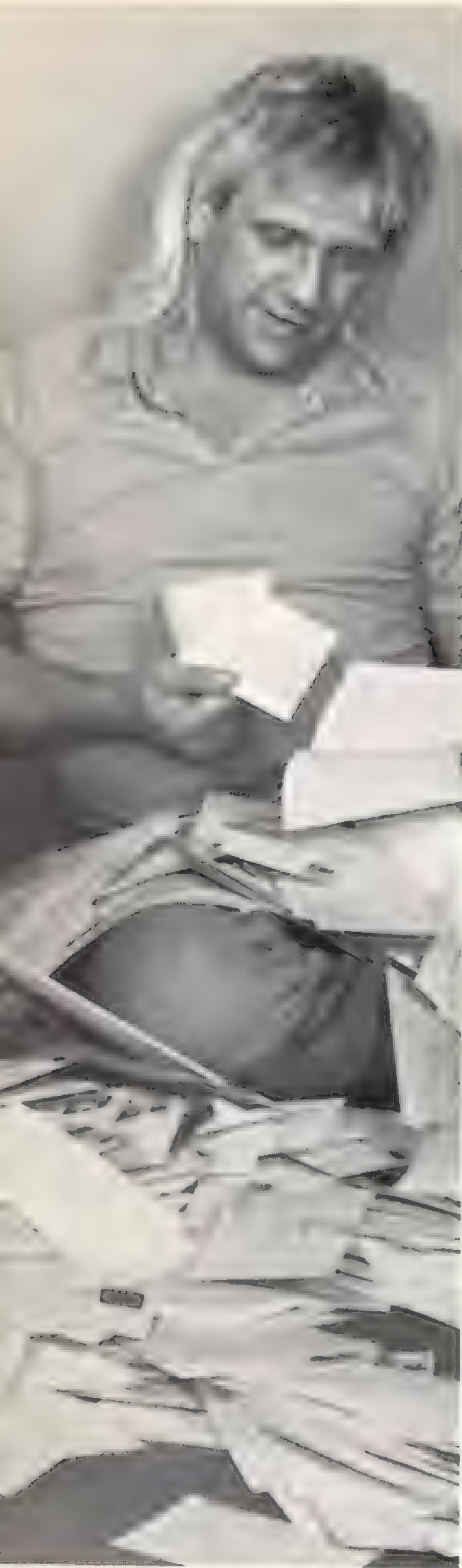
Many of those fans also included additional letters of comment with their ballots.

"I was a mess for two weeks," wrote Cathy Kinney of Greensboro, North Carolina. "I cried, and I cried, and I cried some more. The first time I went to the matches and realized I wasn't going to see Ricky and Robert wrestle that night, I cried again. I may be just 26 years old, but it was the most depressing thing I've ever experienced."



## BRINGS THE ROCK 'N' ROLL





*Robert Gibson and Rick Morton review the tremendous response to the petition in our sister publication, Inside Wrestling, asking them to return to the NWA (left). Gibson executes a sunset flip on M.O.D. Squad member Basher (right).*

"Wrestling just isn't the same without Rick Morton and Robert Gibson," wrote Brenda Dadier of New Orleans. "I was thinking about traveling to Las Vegas to see them, because I'd heard that they were going to be at the Showboat Pavilion for an AWA television taping, but I couldn't get off work to go. I don't really like the AWA's style of wrestling, but I think Morton and Gibson will help change that; I'm going to be watching the AWA a lot more from now on."

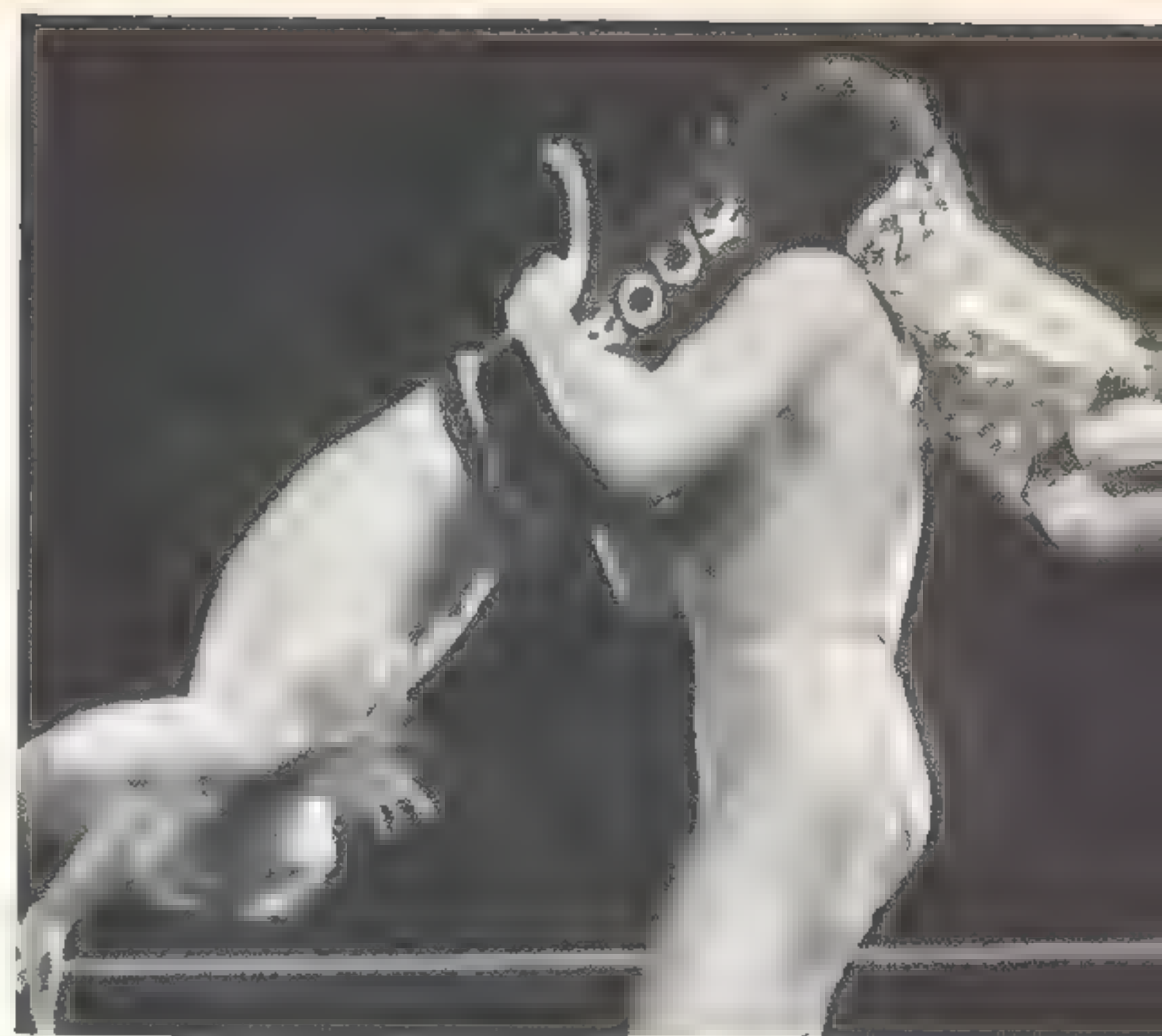
"I'm sure Ricky and Robert know how much we all love them," wrote Carla Quinn of Baltimore, "and I'm sure that they would love to have stayed in the NWA. But I'm also sure that they had their own reasons for leaving, and that they wouldn't have left without good reason to. I have to respect their judgment, and I have to believe that they know what's best for them. I'm sending in my petition because I love Ricky and Robert, and I want them to know that, but I honestly don't think it will do much help in bringing them back."

Sadly for NWA fans, Carla is right.

"I feel kind of bad about this whole petition business," Rick Morton told

*(Continued on page 63)*

*Morton does a flip on Lanny Poffo (center right). Gibson throws Ken Timbs (right). The Rock 'n' Roll Express wrestled in the AWA and independent promotions before returning to the NWA.*



# EXPRESS BACK TO THE NWA!

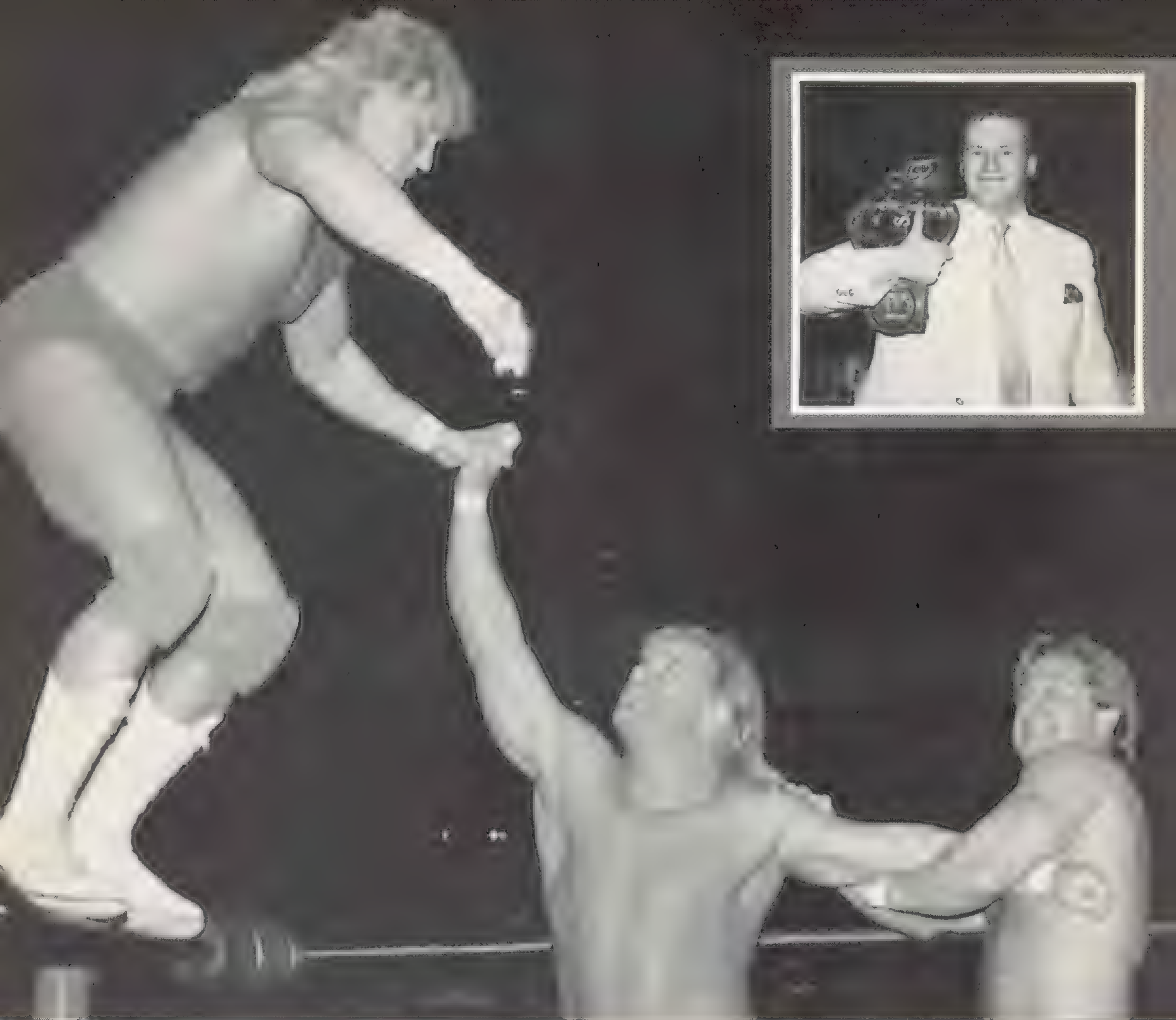


# MADUSA MICELI

AWA World Women's Champion







We've heard some outrageous claims in our day, but when Jim Cornette, the manager of The Midnight Express, said that The Fantastics asked him to manage them, we had to give him a chance to explain himself!

---

*[Editor's note: Recently, Jim Cornette, the infamous manager of The Midnight Express, contacted our offices, offering us what he termed "the story of a lifetime." After informing us what he wanted us to write about, none of the editors would allow the story to be printed as fact. Instead, we present Cornette's unedited account—in his own words. The opinions expressed herein are solely those of Cornette, and are by no means to be confused with those of **Victory Sports Wrestling** or its editors.]*

---

**L**ET'S GET SOMETHING straight right off the bat. I only agreed to do this feature for this magazine because Mama wanted me to. She thinks it's better for me to speak out about my frustrations; her analyst thinks it's very therapeutic. I still think this magazine is far too biased, but the editors do know a hot story when they hear one.

Mama's been pretty worried about my frame of mind ever since The Fantastics stole the belts from my Midnight Express during that ridiculous match in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Never in my illustrious career have I seen such a conspiracy, but it won't do either The Fantastics or the NWA any



# "THE FANTASTICS BEGGED ME TO MANAGE THEM!"

By Jim Cornette

good. You see, *I've* got the goods on *everybody*, especially those two pretty boys!

I know what you fans, all you junior high school dropouts, are expecting, too. You think I'm doing this just to complain about that horrifying match where the human highlight film of tag team wrestling—"Beautiful" Bobby Eaton and "Sweet" Stan Lane—were robbed of those belts. Well, I wouldn't give you all the satisfaction.

Instead, I have incriminating evidence against Tommy Rogers and Bobby Fulton. They're not everything you little girls out there think they are.

In fact, Rogers and Fulton *begged* me to manage them! They did! I stake my reputation on it—this really happened! When I refused, they decided to get even with Bobby, Stan, and me by plotting to take the U.S. belts. I always knew not to trust those guys, and now I *know* I was right. They ended up costing us our title, but I'll get my revenge through this article.

This whole story began in February, when my Midnight Express was flying high in the NWA. Of course, that's not a hard thing to do when your competition consists of low-level drivel like The Road Warriors and the dearly departed Rock 'n' Roll Express. Things were going along swimmingly. One day, I was lounging by the pool at my Louisville mansion

when Raoul, Mama's favorite servant, called me into the house. He said, in his marvelous European accent, that somebody was on the phone for me. He said the man said it was an emergency.

When I got into the house, it turned out to be none other than Rogers on the phone. He said he and Fulton were thinking of coming into the NWA, and they didn't

want to face this kind of competition without a true genius such as myself behind them to insure their health and well-being. He said he also didn't want to face Eaton and Lane at all, and if I was their manager, they wouldn't ever have to face The Midnight Express.

"Please manage us, Jimmy," Rogers howled. "We need you if  
(Continued on page 64)



Stan Lane is caught between The Fantastics—Bobby Fulton and Tommy Rogers (opposite page)—who proceed to give him a double belythrow (above).



# DEMOLITION: FLUKE

By Matt Brock

LET ME STATE for the record that I was totally against the idea of doing this story in the first place. Some people just can't call a spade a spade; either that, or they're too liberal to realize that sometimes there *is* a right and a wrong. There's a black and a white. Not everything has a gray area.

The guys who run this magazine—and I'm talking about those three bleeding hearts: Stu Saks, Bill Apter, and Craig Peters—can see things only one way. When a team like Strike Force uses illegal double-teaming to perform a scientific maneuver, it's outstanding teamwork. When a team like Demolition uses double-teaming to punish an opponent, it's rulebreaking.

Well, I've got news for you, boys. Double-teaming is double-teaming and it's *always* against the rules. The funny thing is, all of these acrobatic tag teams like Strike Force, The Midnight Rockers, and The Fantastics use double-teaming in almost all of their matches, but the only one with the guts to say anything about it is Jesse Ventura, whom people call a rulebreaker's commentator, but is actually just a realist.

*Demolition brandishes their WWF World tag team title belts after an easy defense. Since winning the belts at WrestleMania IV, they have proven to be fighting champions.*





In the beginning, Demolition was one of the worst tag teams in the WWF. But now, less than a year after their formation, these feared rulebreakers have risen to the top of the tag team heap. But can they stay there?

# CHAMPIONS OR CHAMPIONS TO STAY?



*Demolition's double-teaming tactics include a variety of punches (above left) and elbowsmashes (above center). If an opponent had all he can take, they give him more (above right).*

The whole point is that I knew something was up when Apter, Peters, and Saks decided to do this story. They pose the question, "Fluke champions or champions to stay?" but that just disguises their real intent. They pretend to study both sides of a question when they've had their minds made up all along. After all, who can argue with their conclusion when they've studied both sides of an issue "impartially"?

What they had in mind was this: an all-out attack on the rulebreaking style of Demolition; a defense of their beloved, scientific Strike Force; and the conclusion that Demolition, like The Honky Tonk Man, doesn't deserve the belts because of the way they won them.

Their question was answered before the headline was written.

Unfortunately for Saks, Apter, and Peters, that's not the way it's going to be.

I'm no lover of rulebreakers. I've been in this business for all of my adult life, and nobody appreciates an action-packed scientific match more than yours truly. But I hate hypocrisy, and the fact of the matter is that there's no such thing as a scientific wrestler anymore. They're *all* rulebreakers!

If you don't believe that, take a look at the tag team title match at WrestleMania IV in Atlantic City. It opened with a four-man brawl that was started when Tito Santana delivered a high dropkick on Smash to break up an early Demolition ad-

vantage. Then, several times, Santana and Martel combined to set up Ax or Smash for one of their off-the-ropes acrobatic maneuvers.

Demolition, naturally, was also guilty of double-teaming maneuvers, but Santana and Martel had no right to complain about losing the belts the way they did. The only reason they complained is because their double-teaming didn't lead to a pin. Besides, Martel and Santana might still have the belts around their waists if Santana didn't push the referee to the mat and knock him unconscious.

By that time, of course, Martel had Smash in a painful Boston crab. Ax ran in to try and save his partner, but Santana ran across the

*(Continued on page 65)*





**M**ANY WRESTLERS HAVE been labeled superstars, but few have earned that distinction as fully as Rick Steamboat. The man known as "The Dragon" is one of the most popular competitors in the history of the sport, combining strength, aerial tactics, scientific maneuvers, and the martial arts in forming a unique style that is every bit as crowd-pleasing as it is effective.

To outline Steamboat's career is to review a decade of solid success. He

The pride in Rick Steamboat's face is evident as he brings his baby boy to the ring prior to his match at WrestleMania IV (above). "The Dragon" says he is retiring from active wrestling to spend more time with his baby and wife Bonnie (below).

## Rick Steamboat





was voted Rookie of the Year by the fans in 1977, when he came from virtually nowhere to defeat Ric Flair for the NWA U.S. title. A few months later, he and Paul Jones (then a scientific favorite) won the NWA World tag team title. That honor led to their being named Tag Team of the Year for 1978. Steamboat also captured the Mid-Atlantic belt in 1981.

Steamboat added to his reputation as an accomplished tag team wres-


tlar by winning the NWA World title with Jay Youngblood three times in 1983. Shortly thereafter, he shocked his legions of fans by announcing his retirement to devote more time to Steamboat's Gym in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Steamboat returned to wrestling several months later. Moving to the WWF in 1985, he won the Intercontinental championship from Randy Savage at WrestleMania III in 1987 in a match that is considered by most wrestling experts to be one of the greatest of all time. This incredible display of athletic skill and endurance was named *PWI's Match of the Year*.

When Managing Editor Craig Peters and Assistant Editors Gersh Kuntzman and Bob Smith traveled to Charlotte for an exclusive interview with Steamboat, they were surprised to learn that Steamboat has again decided to leave the sport.

**BOB SMITH:** I've got to say right off the bat that I thought one of the sweetest things I've ever seen in a wrestling ring was when you brought your newborn son to the ring before your match against Greg Valentine at WrestleMania IV. Why did you decide to do that, and why haven't we seen you since then?

**RICK STEAMBOAT:** Well, I'll tell you honestly. It was something that my wife, Bonnie, and I had been kicking around for a couple of months prior to WrestleMania IV. I don't know if my career has really come to a complete close, but right now I don't foresee any wrestling for a while. In that light, I just wanted to bring my little boy out there to show the fans the next generation of the Steamboats. Here was like the ol' man and his son, and I was saying to him, "This is it, kid. I want you to see what's going on." It was my way of saying farewell to the fans.



"I Don't Foresee  
Any Wrestling  
For A While"



**CRAIG PETERS:** Does this mean that your relationship with the World Wrestling Federation is over, at least for the time being?

**STEAMBOAT:** That's correct.

**GERSH KUNTZMAN:** Will you return to the ring in the future? Would you be interested in returning to the NWA, where you wrestled during your early years?

**STEAMBOAT:** No, not at all. I have corresponded with some people in Japan. I may go over there on some tours, but if I can avoid it, I just don't want to wrestle anymore, at least right now. If we can get something generated with my other interests, that's the route I want to go. But if nothing comes out of it all, I'm not going to feel let down.

**PETERS:** Do you have any bitterness about anything that has happened to you during your career? Did any-

thing like that prompt your decision? **STEAMBOAT:** No, not at all. It's just time for a change. I'm 35 years old now. I know many of the wrestlers go on in their careers until their 40s. But fortunately, I'm in a position where I don't have to rely on wrestling. Don't get me wrong; I probably have sacrificed a great source of income, but my wife and myself are not greedy people. We live very comfortably, and we don't live out of our means. We try to be very practical. My decision for leaving has nothing to do with *professional* pressure; it's a *personal* decision. I could be right on top again if I wanted to, but I'm choosing not to. I'm choosing to go in another direction. But 10 years from now, you never know what will happen.

**KUNTZMAN:** What are some of your immediate plans?

*(Continued on page 66)*



*Steamboat twists The Honky Tonk Man's arm. "The Dragon" was not expected to lose the Intercontinental title to Honky Tonk as quickly as he did.*



*Greg Valentine feels the pain of Steamboat's armtwist (above left). Steamboat drops Bob Orton over the ropes (above right). Steamboat says he's grateful for all the sport has done for him.*



# PUZZLE FOREIGN WRESTLERS

Look around the hard-hitting world of professional wrestling and you'll see that today more than ever, wrestling is an international game. Not only do wrestlers travel overseas in search of glory, many famous foreign wrestlers have established careers in the States, a testimony to wrestling's commitment to opportunity. Remember, names can be hidden vertically or horizontally and can be spelled forward or backward. Good luck.

Time Limit: 21 Minutes

## NAMES HIDDEN IN THE PUZZLE:

USTINOV • SHEIK • DeBEERS • HART • KHAN • KOLOFF  
• PIPER • ANDRE • COLON • SINGH • RASCHKE  
• ABDULLAH • MICELI • KAMALA • ADAMS

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(ANSWERS ON PAGE 65)



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**READER RESPONSE**

(Continued from page 6)



Tom Zenk wins a test of strength with Billy Robinson. In reader Jerry Parent's opinion, AWA President Stanley Blackburn shouldn't have let Zenk leave the AWA.

ham to insulate themselves in this way?

For example, other than his July 10 singles match with Lex Luger, Ric Flair has virtually been able to shelter his title from even the weakest direct threats. For me, it's not a "Great American Bash" to see The Four Horsemen take on Dusty, Nikita, Lex, and Sting in a eight-man tag team match, it's just dull. Let's see action like at the Clash of the Champions, when Sting and Flair went 45 minutes of exciting head-to-head, no interference wrestling!

LESLIE POSTAL  
 Lynchburg, VA

**SENILE STAN**

An open letter to AWA President Stanley Blackburn:

I don't know where you got

your decision-making skills, but they are extremely weak. If you want to hold on to stars like Paul E. Dangerously, The Midnight Express, Dick Slater, Tom Zenk, and, most notably, Hulk Hogan, you have to make logical decisions! For you, however, this seems impossible.

Why don't you do the fans, officials, and wrestlers a favor and step down before the integrity of the AWA is ruined. For the good of wrestling, "Senile Stan," take a hike!

JERRY PARENT  
 Elk River, MN

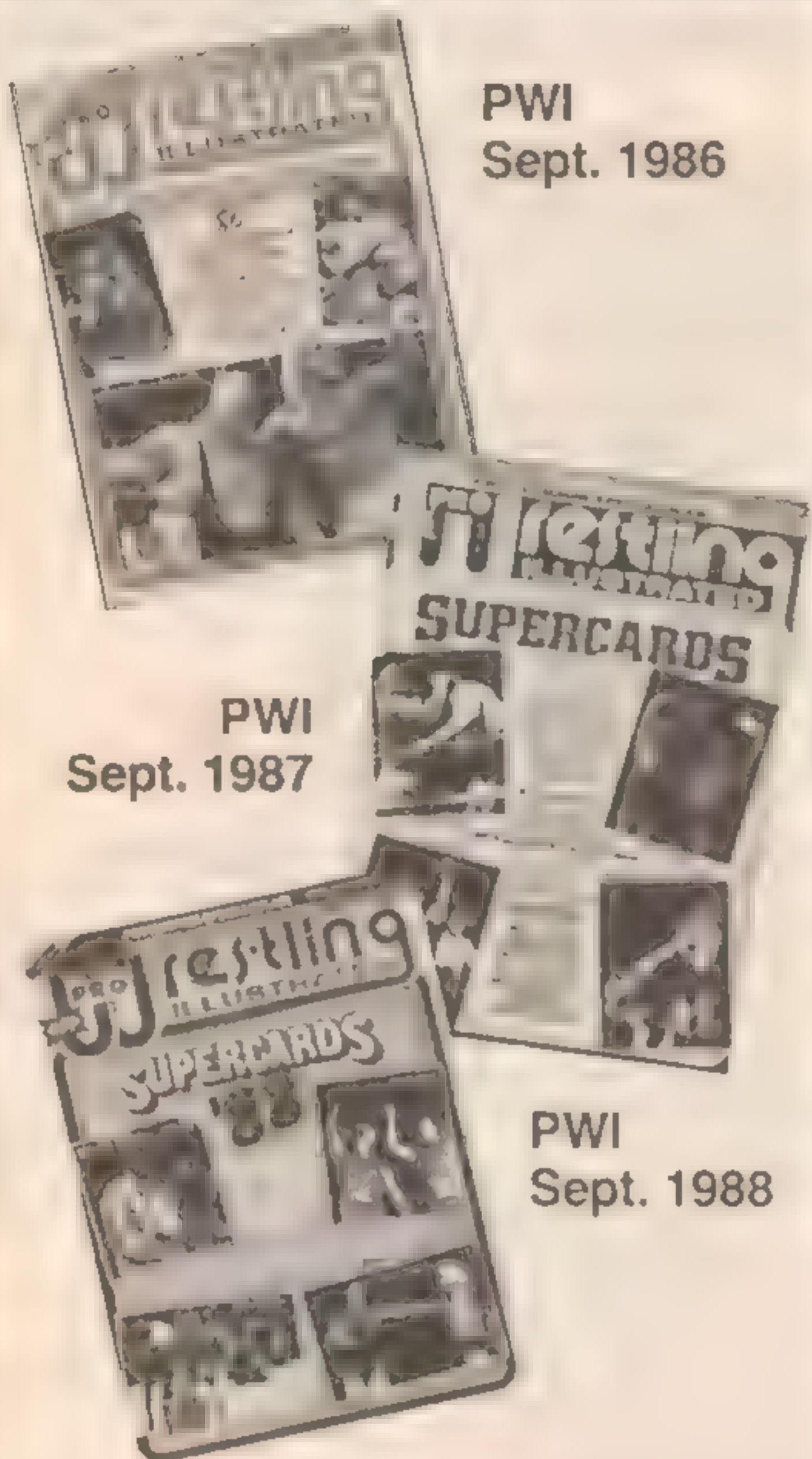
**POWERS OF SHAME**

The minute I heard that Warlord and Barbarian had fled the NWA, I knew that they'd try to

(Continued on page 48)



# A SUPER DEAL ON THE SUPERCARDS!



For the past three years, the September cover-dated "SuperCards" editions of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* have set new standards for wrestling journalism. Bonus pages, special 12-page color sections, and peerless analysis of the annual spring "SuperCards" make the September editions of *PWI* true collectors' items. We have limited supplies of these newsstand sellouts, and they're sure to go fast. Only \$5.00 each. Order today!

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## READER RESPONSE

(Continued from page 46)

come up with some ridiculous explanation. Then I heard that the "official" word is that the formidable duo left because they didn't want to risk their lives on the scaffold. I know the real reason.

Sure, a scaffold match is a dangerous test of courage and wrestling ability, but it shouldn't be enough to drive The Powers of Pain out of the NWA. There is only one other force that could so compel Warlord and Barbarian to put their tails between their legs and take flight. That force is The Legion of Doom.

You see, meeting *any* team in a scaffold match is usually enough to frighten the average wrestlers, but meeting *The Road Warriors* up there is like inviting disaster over for tea. The Warriors are the most vicious, most brutal, most savage team in wrestling today. I don't blame Warlord and Barbarian for drawing the line, even though I am a bit disappointed.

PAUL LIPSON  
Bathgate, OK

### HULKAMANIA RETURNS

I never thought I'd admit this, but I missed Hulk Hogan. Granted, Randy Savage is a great champion, but no one electrifies a crowd like "The Hulkster." Your Summer 1988 cover story ("Belt Or No Belt: Hulk Hogan Is Still The People's Champion") really captured it for me.

But although I am excited about Hulk's return, I am cautious to throw my support behind him in his quest for the WWF title. If he should attempt to take on Savage in a long feud, he is certain to alienate some of his fans, fans who have grown to love the "Macho Man." I am one such fan



*Hulk Hogan's return to active wrestling was eagerly anticipated by reader Jerry Alston, who hopes that Hogan will someday be champion again.*

For this reason, I am looking forward to the culmination of Hulk's feud with Andre and Ted DiBiase as well as the Megapowers vs. Megabucks matches. Only by cooperating with Savage can Hulk hope to return with the class and honor that have always been his trademark.

I predict that "The Hulkster's" return will be a triumphant one and that he will, one day, again be champion. Maybe he could punish The Honky Tonk Man as a warm up! What a dream to have Hulk and Savage holding the two main belts!

JERRY ALSTON  
Stony Brook, NY ☐



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WINTER 1985

**WINTER 1984/Color pinup:** Billy Jack Haynes. **Stories include:** Ventura, Adams, Martel, Flair, Reed.

**FALL 1985/Color pinup:** Steve Keirn & Stan Lane. **Stories include:** Albano & Hogan, DiBiase, Warriors, Garvin.

**WINTER 1985/Color pinup:** Barry Windham. **Stories include:** Hogan, Zbyszko, Kerry, R&R Express, Steamboat, Thesz.

**SPRING 1986/Color pinup:** The Road Warriors. **Stories include:** Martel, Savage vs. Poffo, Hogan, Santana, Steamboat.

**SUMMER 1986/Color pinup:** Rock 'n' Roll Express & Magnum T.A. **Stories include:** Flair, Warriors, JYD, Magnum, Williams.

**FALL 1986/Color pinup:** Randy Savage. **Stories include:** R&R Express, Missy, Roberts, Windham, Luger, Rhodes.

**WINTER 1986/Color pinup:** Hulk Hogan. **Stories include:** Flair, Freebirds, Hogan, Andre, Watts, Haynes, Fantastics.



SUMMER 1986



FALL 1986

**SPRING 1987/Color pinup:** The Four Horsemen. **Stories include:** Ventura, T.A., Bulldogs, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

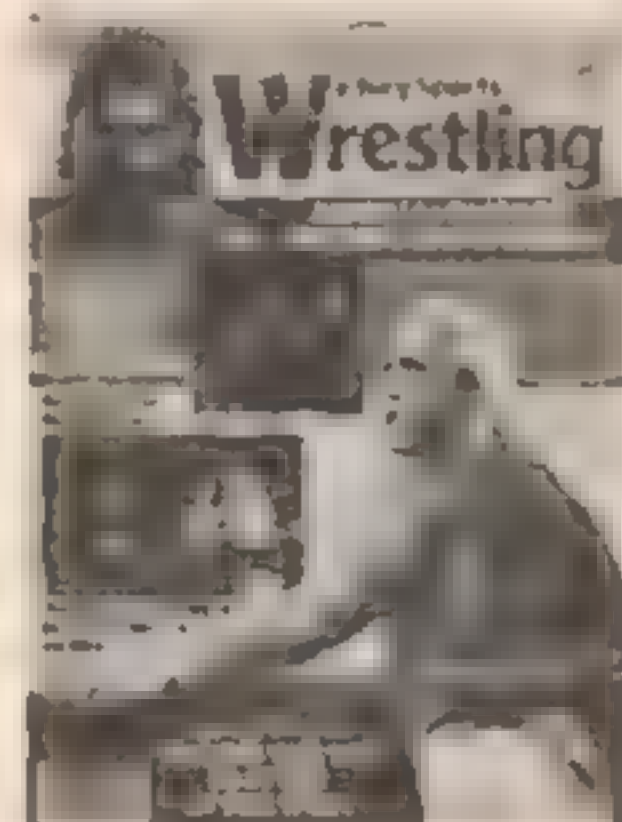
**SUMMER 1987/Color pinup:** Road Warriors workout. **Stories include:** Hogan-Andre, Rockers, Koloff, Warriors, Hall-Luger.

**FALL 1987/Color pinup:** Dark Journey. **Stories include:** Albano, Hogan, T.A., Lane, Hyatt, Hennig, Luger.

**WINTER 1987/Color pinup:** Jesse Ventura. **Stories include:** Kerry, Rhodes, Hogan, Flair, Honky Tonk, DiBiase.

**SPRING 1988/Color pinup:** Elizabeth. **Stories include:** Hennig, Koloff, Savage, Strike Force, Warriors, Andre-Hogan.

**SUMMER 1988/Color pinup:** Missy Hyatt. **Stories include:** Rock 'n' Roll Express, Hogan, Sting, Luger, Owen Hart, Animal.



SPRING 1987

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## INTRODUCING

(Continued from page 9)

ioned way: by working at it. Like the scientific wrestlers of years past, he sports no fancy ring jacket, mascot, or valet. He simply steps in the ring and lets his ability do the talking.

"That's just the way I was brought up," said Rice, a 6'1", 230-pound native of Edina, Minnesota. "That's really my true personality. I can get down and dirty if I have to, but I prefer to wrestle clean. I'm absolutely committed to scientific wrestling. I'm a pretty nice guy if you get to know me—unless you get me riled up!"

Rice is the latest example of a multisport amateur athlete who chose wrestling as the route in which to make his mark in the sports world. He was a soccer, football, and hockey standout at Edina High School, but wrestled only sparingly as an amateur.

"I really wasn't into it too seriously at that point," recalled Rice. "I was trying to become the best hockey player I could be."

In addition to starring for his high school and college hockey teams, Rice played junior hockey in Des Moines, Iowa, for two years, and was examined closely by several National Hockey League scouts. It was during his football sessions, however, that he considered becoming a wrestler.

"I started hitting the weights pretty good," he said. "As my body grew and matured, I figured I might want to contact some people and see if I could get into wrestling. I certainly was big enough for it."

Luckily for Rice, the person he contacted was Brad



Rheingans, a former member of the United States Olympic team who operates a pro wrestling camp in Minnesota. For Rheingans, who has trained several of today's top stars in addition to being a pro in his own right, Rice's first day at camp was like love at first sight.

"We ran through some preliminary drills, and naturally Ricky was raw and unpolished," recalled Rheingans. "Then I asked him to try throwing a dropkick at his sparring partner. Well, the guy was nearly decapitated by the highest dropkick I've ever seen a rookie deliver. Ricky got up six feet in the air! Right then, I knew I had an incredible prospect on my hands. As for his opponent—well, he just walked from the ring and quit the camp right then and there."

Rheingans placed Rice in matches in several independent promotions before allowing him to enter a major federation, but now he feels that the local kid he trained has blossomed into a legitimate contender for the AWA World title.

"Most young wrestlers take a long time, sometimes years, to develop into contenders," said

Rheingans. "But Ricky is different. He's ready for [Curt] Hennig right now. If Hennig gets hit with even *one* of those dropkicks, we'll see a new champion. I guarantee it."

"The dropkick is getting higher and stronger," said Rice, who seems genuinely surprised by the attention he's received. "It seems to be a natural ability I have. But I don't want people to think that's all I can do. If you can name a wrestling hold, I can do it—and do it *well*, thanks to Brad."

Despite his hot start, Rice will need many more matches to become a legitimate title threat. All he's looking for now, he insists, is a chance.

"It's true that I'm a no-frills kind of guy," Rice said with a smile. "It doesn't bother me when people call me that. I may not be as flashy as a lot of the other wrestlers today, but I'd be willing to bet that I can beat most of them. I'm proud to be competing in the AWA. All I need now is the opportunity to prove to the world that this is one rookie who's ready to defeat the best this sport has to offer—and that *definitely* includes Hennig." □

**ULTIMATE WARRIOR**

(Continued from page 12)

the name of Sting. The duo was massive but raw, and in early 1986, Rock became The Dingo Warrior and moved to the raucous world of World Class wrestling.

It was in Texas that this talented competitor began to show the potential that his incredible physique had always promised. Initially he was managed by Gary Hart, but he never really wanted to be a rulebreaker.

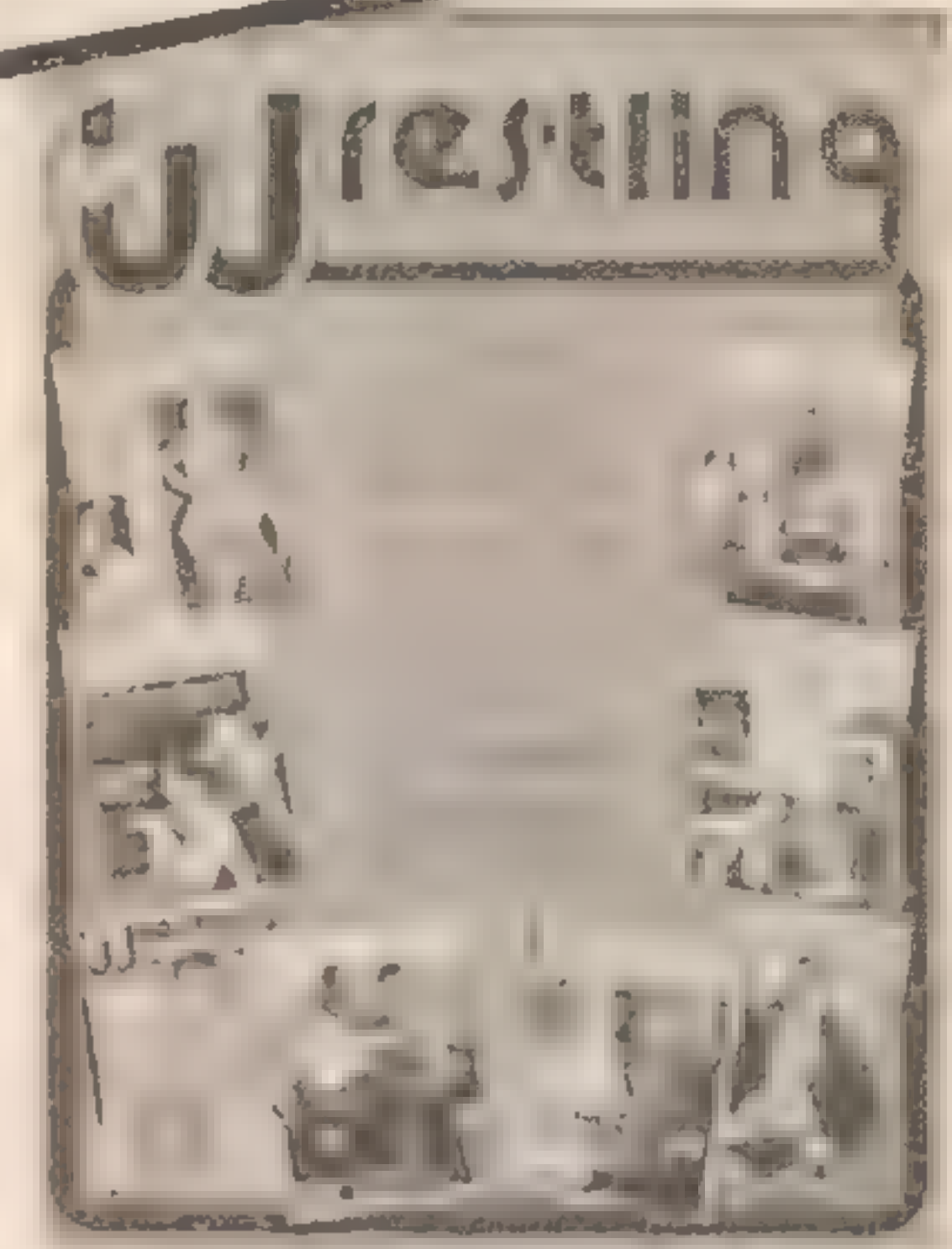
"Hart wanted Warrior to savage everybody he came in contact

with," said World Class referee/wrestler Rick Hazzard, who got to know Dingo quite well during the Warrior's Texas tenure. "He hated that kind of garbage. Hart didn't last long as Warrior's manager, and then the kid tried Percy Pringle, but it just wouldn't work. He enjoyed the company of the fans too much to fall for the false promises of those two."

Breaking off with the rulebreakers seemed to be the right tonic, as

(Continued on page 52)

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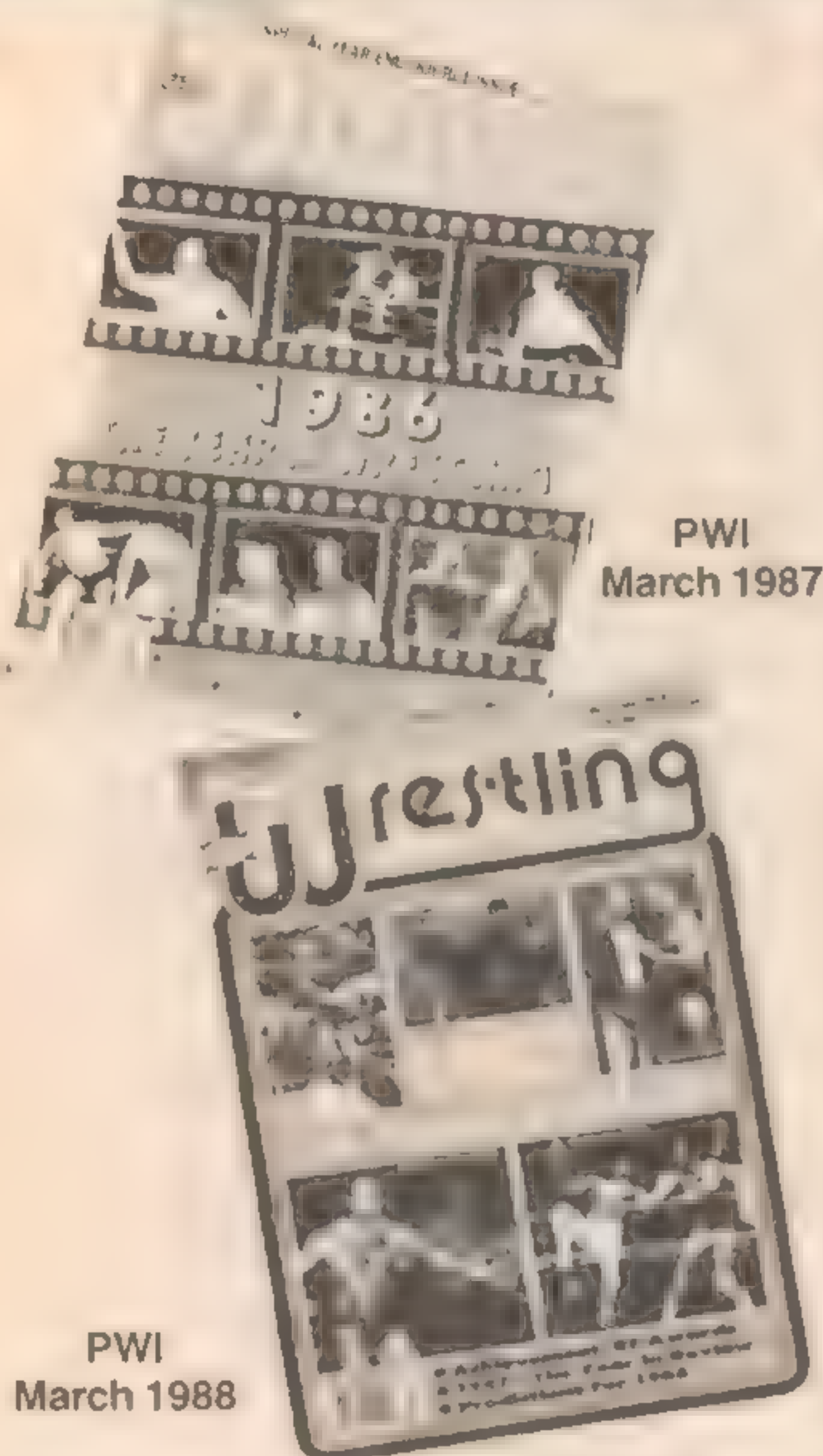
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## ULTIMATE WARRIOR

(Continued from page 51)

he soon captured the World Class tag team title with Lance Von Erich. Later, he won his first singles belt in the form of the Texas heavyweight championship. Although he was successful, he remained restless.

"Despite all his titles, Warrior wanted to be known as one of the best wrestlers in the world, not just another muscleman," recalled Hazzard. "At the same time, he was determined not to tackle too much too soon."

That was exactly what many critics feared when he entered the WWF in June 1987. He changed his name again—this time becoming The Ultimate Warrior—but proceeded very cautiously. Instead of pushing himself into matches against top-10 competitors right away, he primed himself by spending several months in smaller arenas and on high-school cards, where he tested his mettle against opponents like Terry Gibbs and Barry Horowitz. It wasn't the cream of the crop, but it was a logical first step in a federation loaded with talent.

What the Warrior lost in large purses he more than made up for

in experience. He continued to hone his wrestling skills in each successive match, and several months ago he decided it was time to hit the best of the WWF with everything he had. The WWF's best may never recover.

Today, the Warrior's plans are unclear, but he's certainly opened the eyes of the rulebreaking establishment. Hercules is not an easy opponent by anyone's standards, but the Warrior proved that his power was equal to the task. Race is a master of technical wrestling and ruthless brawling, but even his kind of experience proved futile; the Warrior was just too powerful.

The Honky Tonk Man's Intercontinental title would seem a likely first title for the Warrior to strive for. Perhaps even WWF champion Randy Savage should keep his eyes open for a challenge from the Warrior, who has firmly established himself as a worthy opponent.

In the meantime, The Ultimate Warrior is looking for more top-10 opponents to gorilla-press into submission, just as he did with Hercules.

Any takers? ☐

## PAULA LAWLER

(Continued from page 18)

what's wrong and he ignores me. His ego is getting out of hand, too. We have a pair of "his" and "hers" bath towels in the main bathroom. Well, the other day, I walked into the bathroom and saw that Jerry's bath towels were replaced by towels that say, "King." Imagine that, "King" and "hers" bath towels. It's ridiculous!

Then about a week ago, I was talking on the phone when Jerry walked into the house. He saw me

on the phone and said, "C'mon, already, get off the phone." I figured that Jerry was waiting for a call, so I excused myself and hung up. Then, when I asked him who he was waiting for, he said, "Nobody, but you never know when somebody's gonna try to get in touch with me. A champion has to be accessible."

Well, Jerry has been anything but accessible since he won the  
(Continued on page 54)



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(Continued from page 52)

I would never leave my husband, but the sad thing about this is that Jerry and I always used to dream about the day that he'd be World champion. Now I almost wish it never happened. □

(Continued from page 23)

In truth, Heenan needs Andre as much as Andre needs him. His stable has become a bit unstable as of late. Harley Race, the most accomplished of all his wrestlers, is out of action for an

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undetermined amount of time with an illness. Rick Rude seems more content to kiss every female fan in wrestling than to attempt to unseat Savage. The Islanders are stalled in going after the World tag title since Demolition, another set of rulebreakers, won the belts. And Hercules Hernandez has been on a serious downslide, as he has been dominated in matches against The Ultimate Warrior and Duggan in recent weeks.

It has been Heenan's goal to manage a world champion in the WWF. Although he had managed Nick Bockwinkel's lengthy title reign in the AWA, it has been several years since any Heenan family member won a title. He realized even *his* reputation was beginning to fade. Andre was still his best bet for gaining wrestling immortality.

Suddenly, Andre has taken on his most rigorous schedule of matches in years. His name on a WWF wrestling card is becoming the rule rather than the exception. As far as his opponents are concerned, they would have preferred that Heenan had stayed in the background.

No one has been able to stop Andre. Bam Bam Bigelow, generally hailed as one of the fastest rising young competitors in the sport, could not prevent being pinned by Andre in less than three minutes at Madison Square Garden. Andre's performance against Bigelow was a stunning testimony to the managerial genius of Heenan.

"I haven't seen Andre look that good in five years," recalled veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock, on hand for Bigelow's quick loss. "Andre actually performed a kneedrop in that match. Now, for hundreds of wrestlers, a kneedrop is no big thing. But to see that 500-pounder have the mobility to perform the maneuver is something I wasn't prepared for. Bigelow had no chance at all in that match. The rumors of Andre's demise are greatly exaggerated. It's Heenan's influence that Andre needs. A lot of the fans hate both of them, but I won't argue with success."

Other WWF wrestlers were beginning to believe the stories of Andre's decline, and one by one they lined up to take a shot at him and a piece of his legend. Each man suffered a humiliating loss. Jake Roberts would like to forget his match against Andre. Roberts excited the crowd with a show of valor, but that did little to help him win the match. It was similar to cursing a bomb before it hits the ground.

(Continued on page 56)

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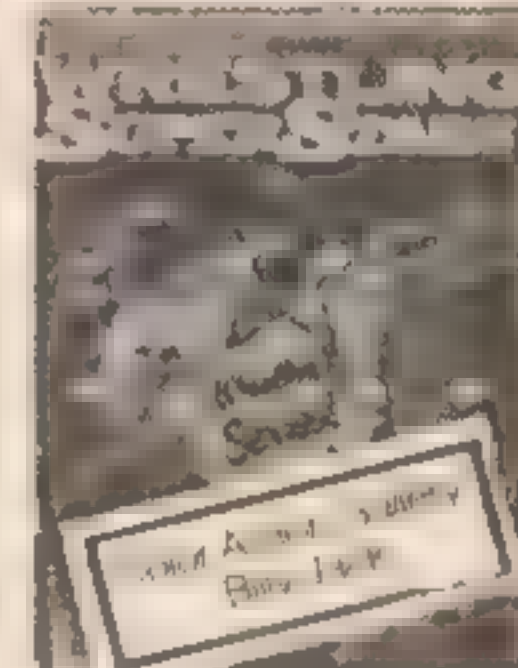
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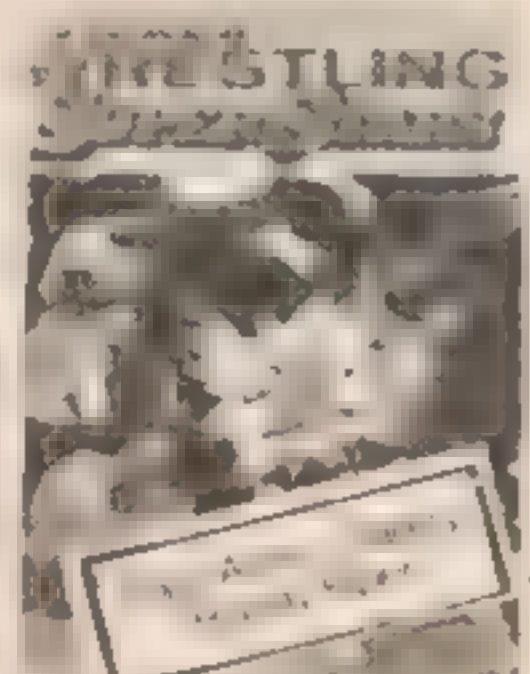
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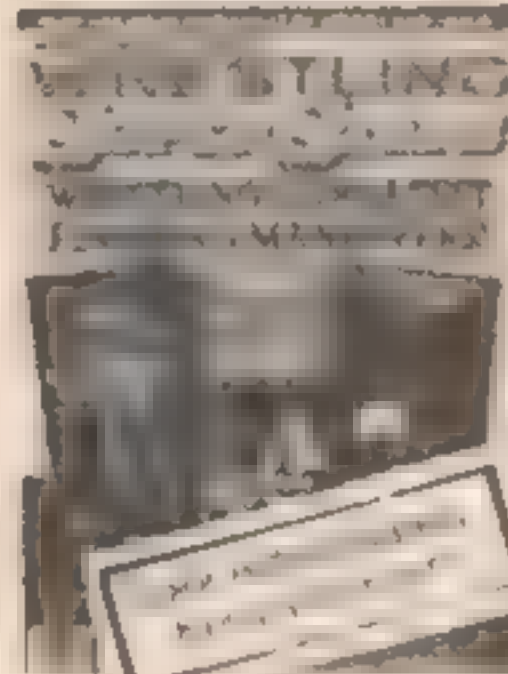
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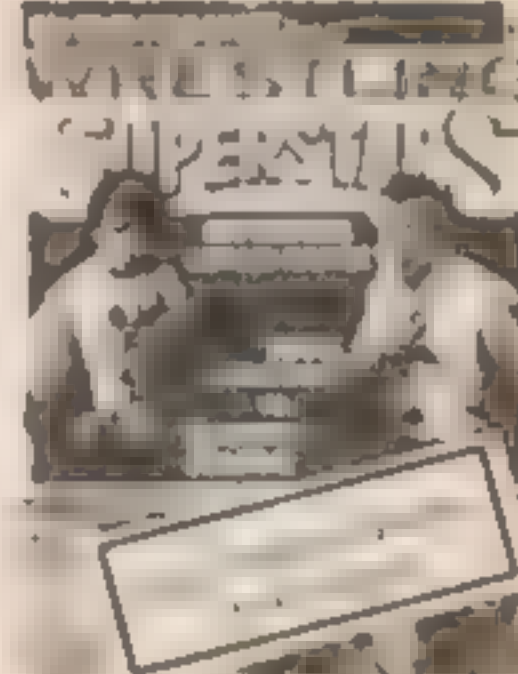
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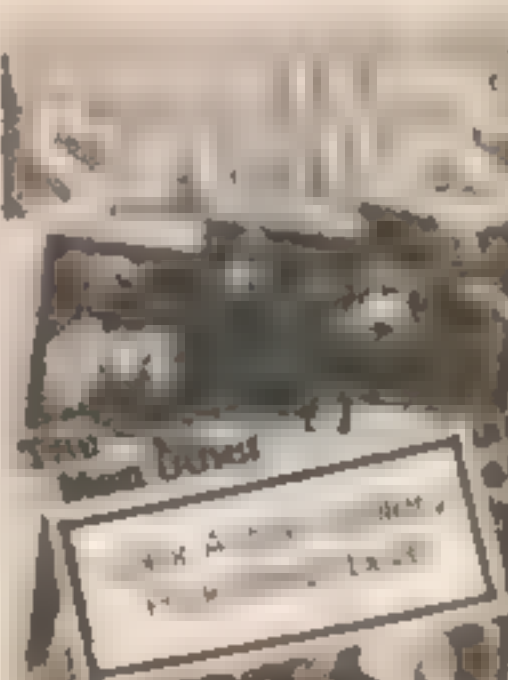
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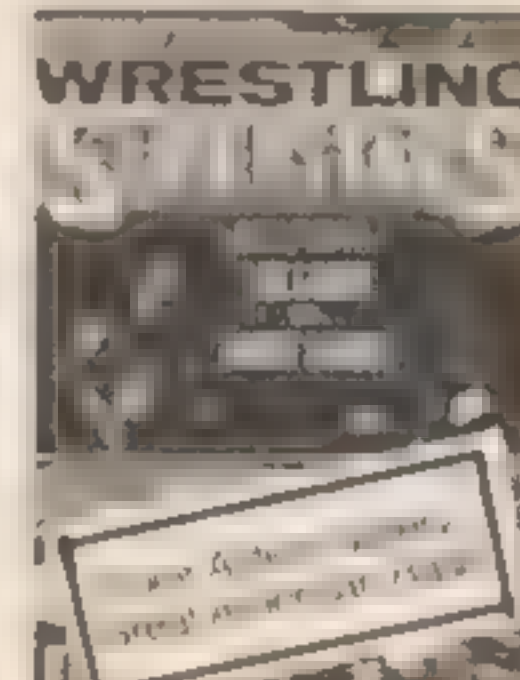
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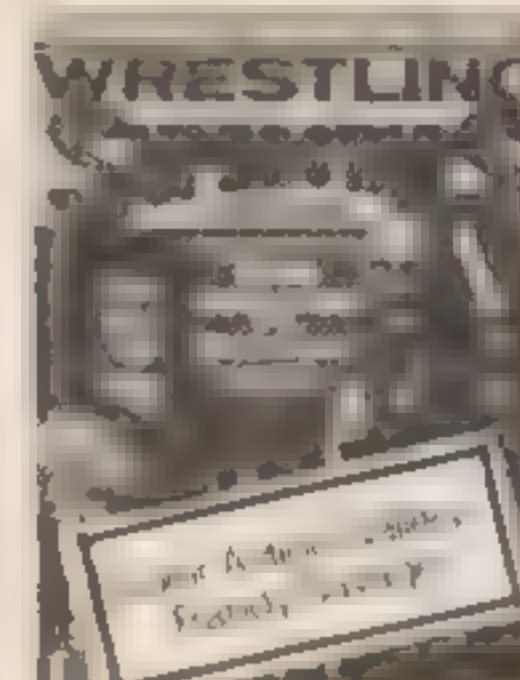
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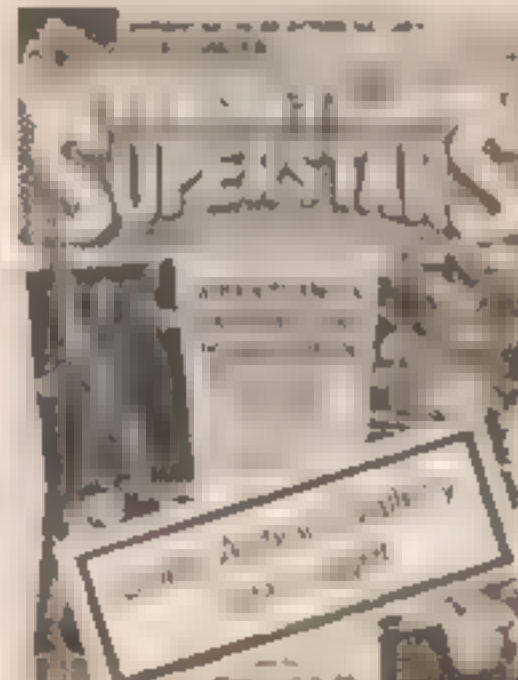
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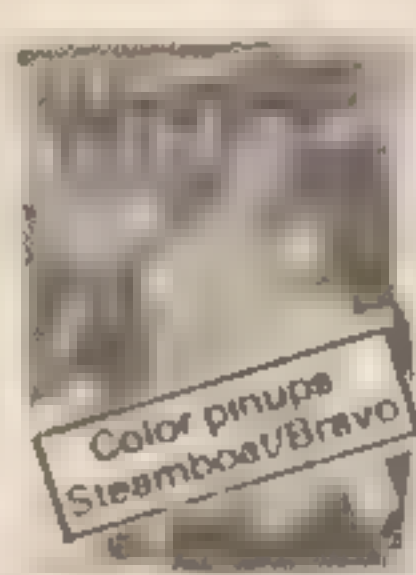
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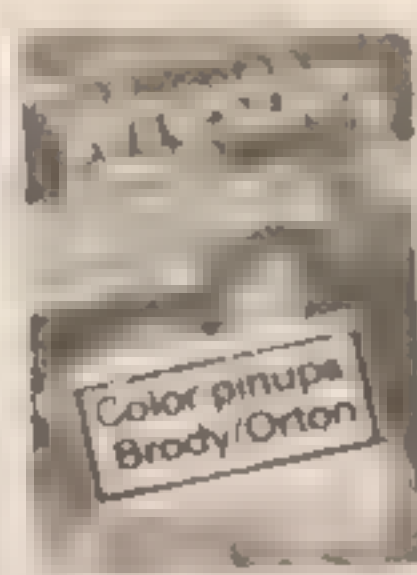
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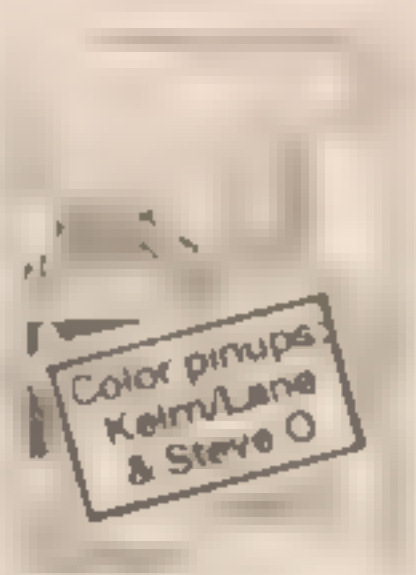
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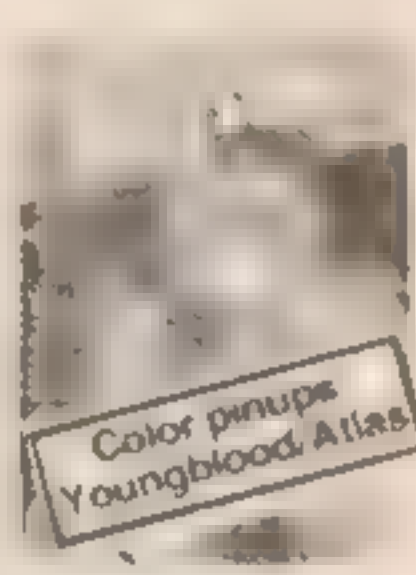
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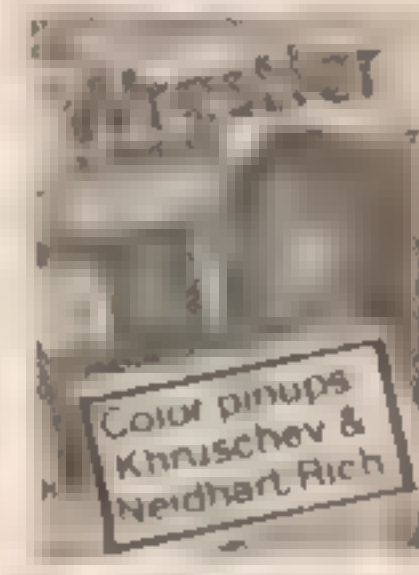
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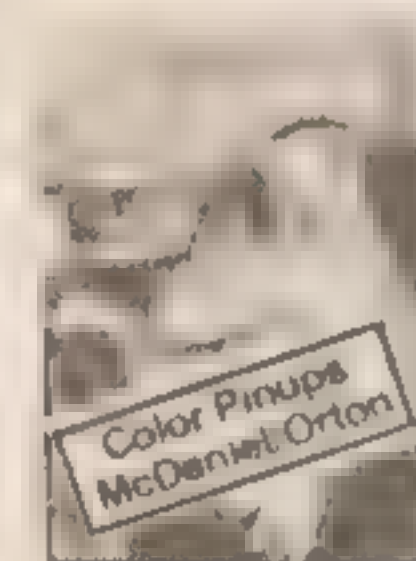
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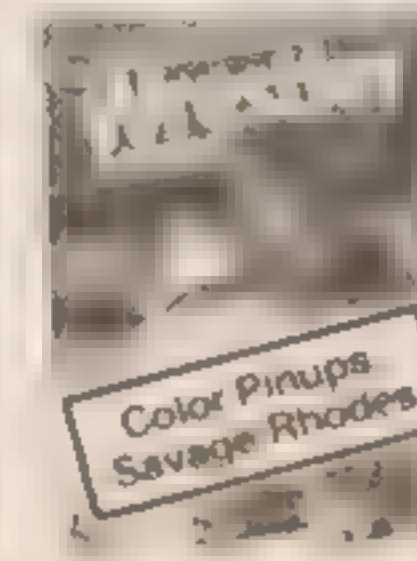
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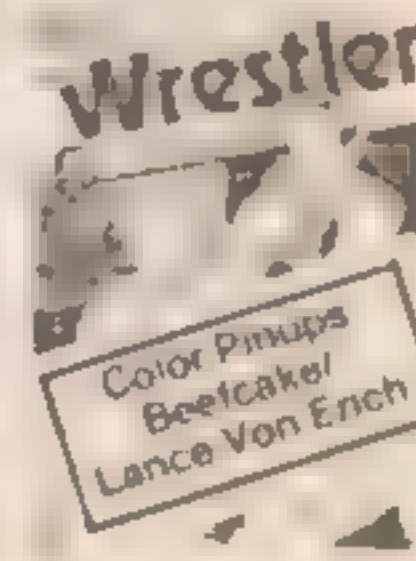
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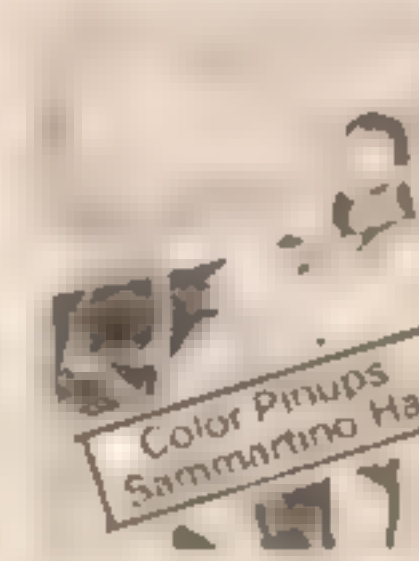
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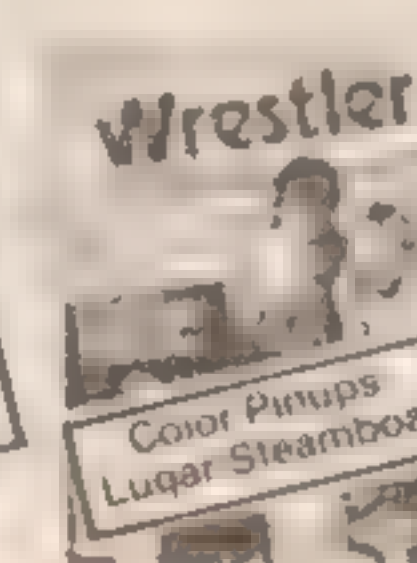
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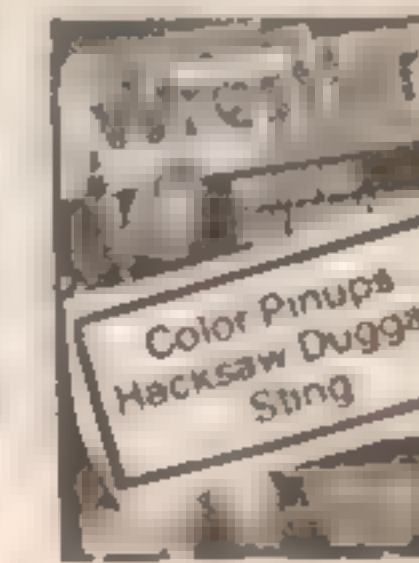
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## HEENAN & ANDRE

(Continued from page 55)

Roberts tried to take Andre off his feet by throwing a shoulder tackle at him. Andre just smiled. A second time. Andre got woozy. A third time. Andre stumbled. A *fourth* time. Andre crumbled to the canvas. Above the crowd noise, Heenan could be heard screaming at the Giant. Six minutes later, Andre sat on Roberts for the pin. So much for persistence.

During this same period of time, Duggan began badgering Heenan during television tapings in an attempt to get a bout against Andre. Although Heenan appeared annoyed by Duggan, the match was signed anyway.

Andre proved that payback is indeed hell. In their hotly anticipated match at the Pontiac Silverdome, the Giant wrestled like a madman. The match ended when Heenan distracted the referee, enabling Andre to grab Duggan's 2x4 and slam it against Duggan's skull. Duggan was counted out. Andre was so impressive that one wonders why Duggan challenged him in the first place.

Since WrestleMania IV, Andre the Giant has scored impressive victories over four wrestlers in the WWF Top 10, and has also taken a countout decision against Savage. Each victory came under Heenan's management.

It's a clear message to the WWF: The Giant is awake. Not only is he winning decisively, but his "Brain" is thinking clearly again. It's the kind of combination that produces victories.

And championships. □

## KERRY VON ERICH

(Continued from page 25)

**Q:** Which brings us to one of the most unlikely pairings of the year. Your teaming with Hayes surprised many people, and most of the fans I know are very excited about your friendship. Will we see you team with Michael again in the months to come?

**A:** Michael came to my rescue when Gary Hart and Al Perez were attacking me. I saved him when An-



gel of Death and Parsons ganged up on him. We've got a very good mutual understanding. But I have my doubts about Michael right now.

Q: How can that be? As far as I can tell, he's done nothing but help you out the past several months.

A: That's true. We even managed to defeat his Freebird buddies as a tag team. But after the "Triple Dome of Terror" match at the Parade of Champions, Michael and Terry Gordy seem to have struck up a friendship once again. As you said before, Gordy was one of the ones to hurt my dad. I've trusted Michael so far, but if he's going to be teaming with Gordy, he's going to have to do a lot to keep my trust. A whole lot.

Q: Particularly with those other men still calling for your blood and your title.

A: That's precisely my point. You know, I used to dream about the day that Roberts, Gordy, and the rest of their friends would take Hayes' lead and stopped all this feuding—not only with me and Kevin, but with the rest of the World Class wrestlers. I guess to expect that to happen would be pretty silly.

Q: But are you still friends with Hayes? Are your days as teammates history?

A: I wouldn't say that. Hayes has done nothing to betray me. He's still a friend. What I'm trying to say is that I'd hate for something to come between us now. We've both come too far to have a problem now.

Q: Indeed. How has your brother Kevin reacted to all the controversy surrounding your career?

A: Kevin is like the rock of Gibraltar when everything around me goes crazy. He's the one I can always count on to be there when I need him, and I always do the same for him. It doesn't hurt either that year after year his wrestling skills continue to improve. I don't think he gets the recognition he deserves for

being a great wrestler. I may be the champion, but as far as I'm concerned my big brother will always be the greatest wrestler in the world.

Q: Well said. How does he get along with Hayes?

A: Well, they teamed up recently at The Sportatorium and they beat Killer Brooks and The Hood in less than six minutes. They seem to get along just fine, and the other members of my family have grown to like Hayes, too.

Q: Despite winning the title twice during 1988, you had to undergo months of therapy and training to get yourself back in the ring after your terrible motorcycle accident back on June 4, 1986. It took a lot of perseverance just to get back into the ring, let alone win a title. Do you feel any lasting effects from your injuries?

A: I'd be lying if I said I didn't think about it every day. But right now it's more a psychological thing than it is physical. Sometimes, I get a little bit tentative in the ring, and that gets me in trouble. But I've seen reports that I've been favoring my right ankle. I just don't see it. Believe me, there's no pain there. If anything, I've been paying so much attention to the ankle in training, it's stronger than it was.

Q: Are you bitter about how things worked out for you?

A: How can I be bitter? I keep the proper frame of mind. I realize that I'm blessed to be where I am today. There are a lot of people in this world that are a lot worse off than I am. In recent years, I've spoken to a lot of people who have lost loved ones in accidents. I try to help them by telling them about my experiences. When you think about it, I have little to complain about. I've got my health, my family, and I can still compete in the sport I love more than anything else in the world. What else could I want?

Q: Some people think your physique is  
(Continued on page 58)

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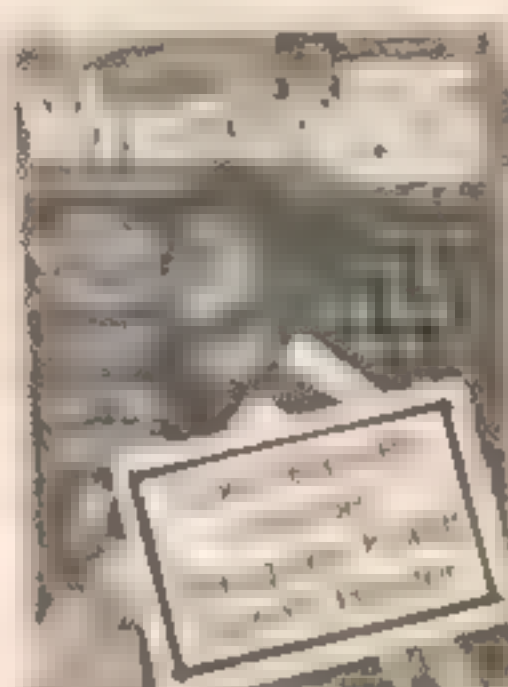
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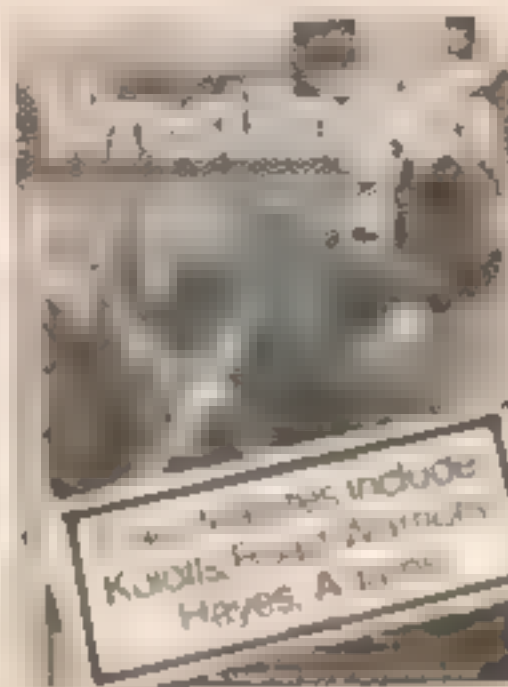
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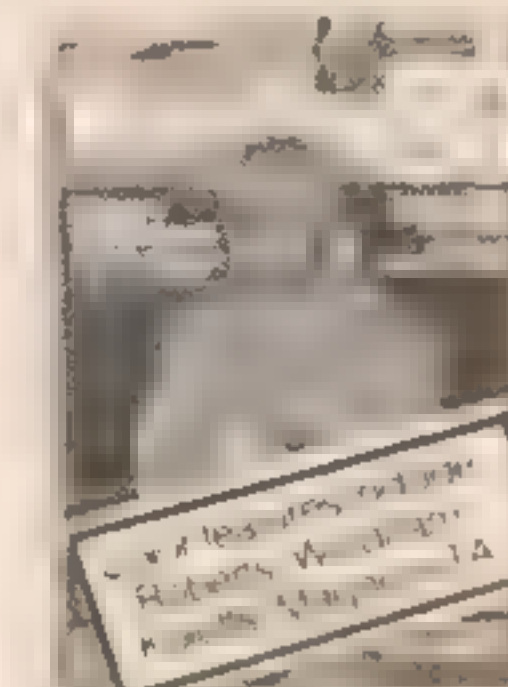
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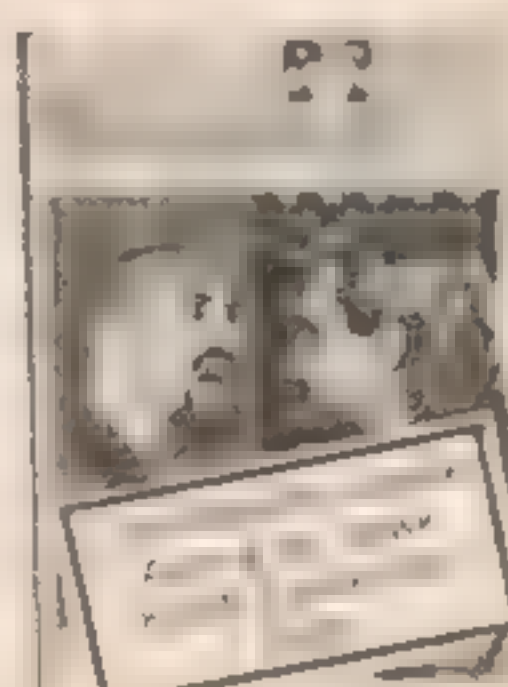
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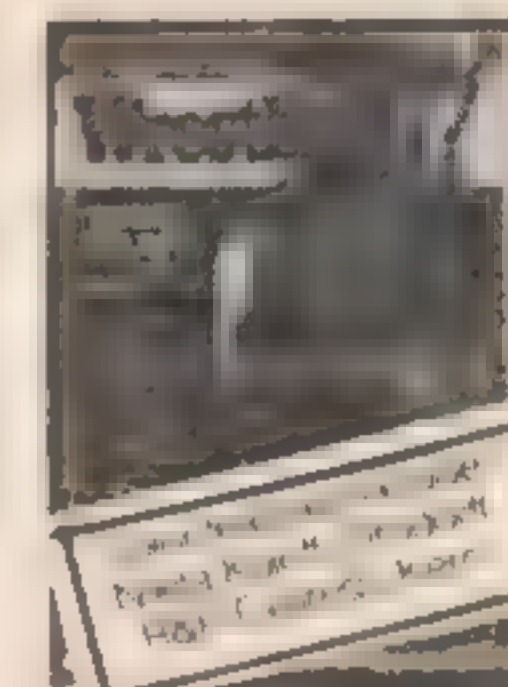
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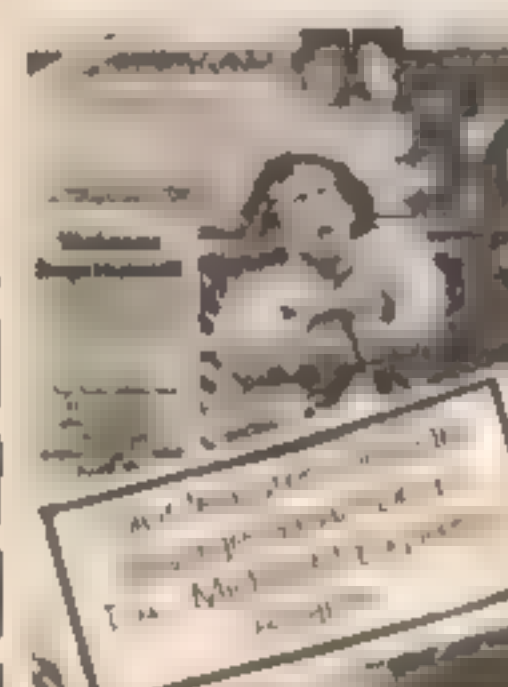
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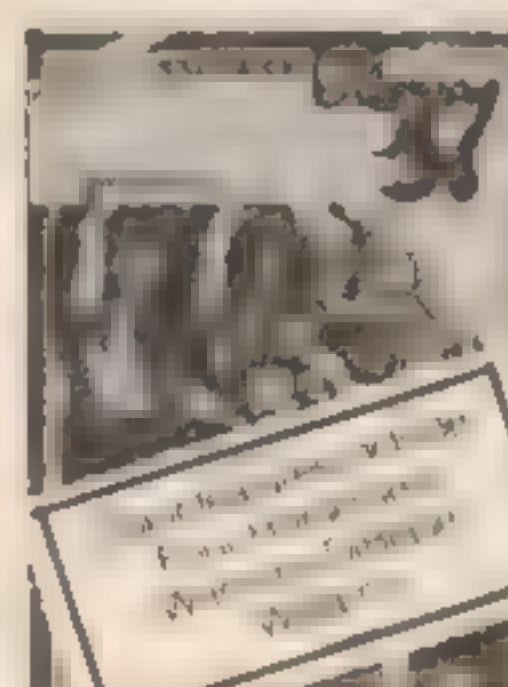
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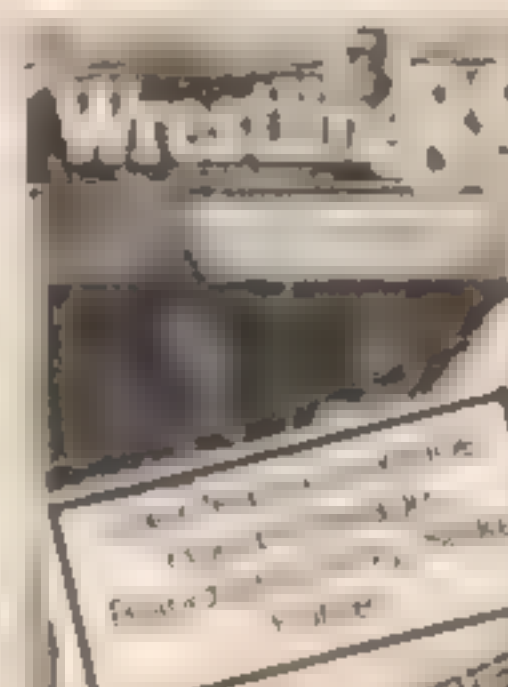
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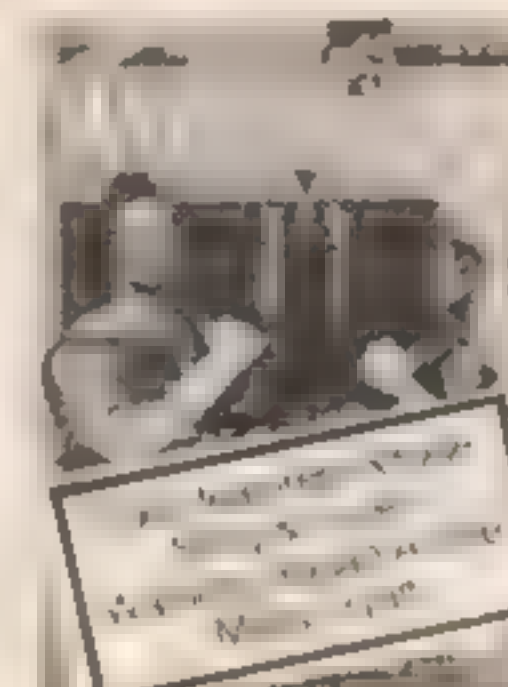
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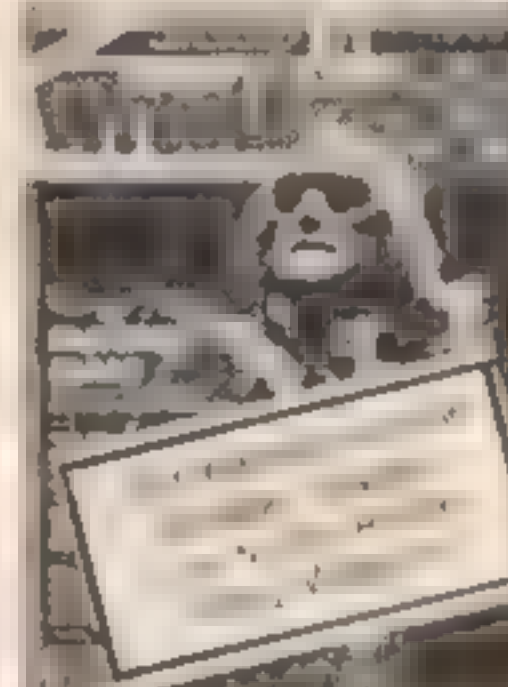
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## KERRY VON ERICH

(Continued from page 57)

better now than it's ever been. You've done a great job of getting yourself back in shape, particularly your upper body.

A: Thanks. It's nice to hear something nice about my condition once in a while (laughs).

Q: Now that you have regained the title, it appears that everyone will be gunning for your belt. Almost everybody in World Class has publicly challenged you. Parsons is still calling for your scalp, too.

A: That's fine with me. Parsons used to be a good friend of the Von Erichs. He used to tag with us all the time. Then all that Freebird poison started creeping into his bloodstream somewhere along the line, and now he's a changed man. He can't really complain, though, because he knows he only won my title because Gordy konked me on the head when the lights went out. So let him rant and rave. The fans know him for the fraud he really is.

Q: One thing I've wanted to ask you about for a long time concerns the World Class tag team title, which you and Kevin continue to hold. It's become kind of a lost title, hasn't it? You and Kevin rarely defend those belts.

A: It's only because of our singles pursuits. Believe me, we'll be defending that title. We never meant to lose sight of our tag team; it's just that we've both been so busy with our feuds. The World Class officials realize that we are the champions. We're very proud to hold those belts.

Q: As champion, what would you like to see happen over the next several months?

A: First, I think I'll be able to hold on to the championship for a while this time, provided that the lights

(Continued on page 60)





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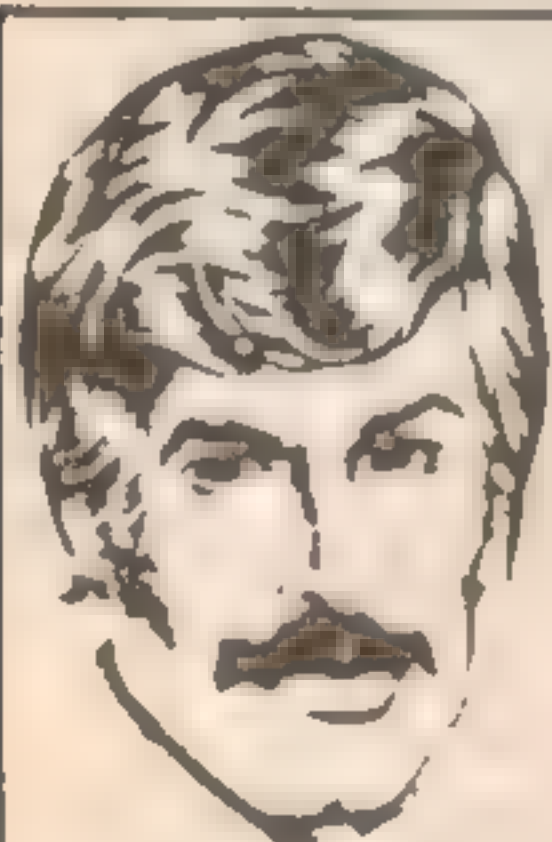
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## KERRY VON ERICH

(Continued from page 58)

stay on and the ring doesn't collapse (laughs). Second, I want Kevin to start to get the respect he deserves in the wrestling world. Most important, though, I'd like to put an end to all these feuds and get back to some good, hard wrestling. I think a lot of the fans feel

the same way. Unfortunately, people like Gordy, Roberts, and Parsons only know about one thing, and that's mindless violence. Sometimes, you have to do things you don't want to do, but I guess I still need to teach those guys a *serious* lesson. □

## SAVAGE & HOGAN

(Continued from page 28)

York. "But still, the way Savage won it was great because, when you look at it, Hogan really won the match. DiBiase had Savage beaten, but Hulk wouldn't let the belt fall into the hands of a man like DiBiase. I think, afterward, everybody was cheering Hogan and Elizabeth more than they were cheering Savage."

"Hogan is the greatest champion ever, period," said Julie Bowden of Newark, New Jersey. "Savage can hold the belt for a while, but he knows, and we all know, that if Hogan ever challenged him to a match, Hogan would beat him in a second. When Savage was Intercontinental champion, he wrestled Hogan a million times, but he could never beat him. Hulk got eliminated from the tournament because he got carried away against Andre, but if that didn't happen, he would've won easily."

Incredibly, many fans still perceive Hogan, not Savage, as the champion. Wrestling's boom period began in 1984, when Hogan won the title and attracted many new fans to the sport. To many WWF fans, Hogan is the only champion they've ever known. It's almost inconceivable to them that anybody else could have the belt.

"Hogan is the champion in my heart, and that's the only place it counts," said 14-year-old Richie Miniveri, who, as it turns out, first

started watching wrestling in 1984. "They talk about Ric Flair and Curt Hennig and all these other guys, but they're *nothing* compared to Hogan—and that includes Savage. I just know that Hulk will get the belt back. But until he does, I'll cheer for Savage because that's who Hulk likes."

Despite this, Savage is a much more talented all-around wrestler than Hogan. Although Hogan is stronger, Savage is a vastly superior aerial artist and has far greater scientific skills. He also has more stamina. Fans often make the mistake of misjudging the 1986 and 1987 matches between Hogan and Savage when, in fact, Hogan merely won because Savage was a crazed maniac who easily lost track of his game plan ... if he had one at all.

But now that he's more secure in his relationship with Elizabeth, the fans, and—most important—himself, Savage is a much better wrestler now than he was a year ago. Savage probably would have beaten DiBiase in the tournament final, but that match was anything but a one-on-one battle. Andre the Giant constantly distracted Savage and kept him from maintaining an advantage. People are mistaken when they say that Savage won because of Hogan; he won *despite* Andre's interference.

(Continued on page 62)



## SAVAGE & HOGAN

(Continued from page 60)

Perhaps the only way for Savage to prove his worthiness as champion is to wrestle Hogan and beat him. While Savage would most likely accept a friendly challenge from Hogan, "The Hulkster," fearing the dangerous precedent it could set, isn't likely to ask for a title match. As champion, Hogan never offered his friends and fellow fan favorites title matches. If Hogan wrestled Savage and beat him, wouldn't he have to accept challenges from fellow fan favorites in the future?

Of course, Hogan is better off *never* wrestling Savage. That way, the "Macho Man" will live in his shadow forever and the Hogan legend will never be surpassed. □

## MISSY HYATT

(Continued from page 31)

"I'm glad you're here, Matt," he said, glowing. "Missy's about to clean the bathroom. I knew you wouldn't want to miss *that*!" How right he was. We headed straight to the Lawler bathroom.

Although Jerry's success in the mat sport has enabled him to maintain a cleaning service for the past 10 years or so, Jerry told me that, anticipating a win, he had made special advance preparations for Hyatt's arrival the moment the Fuller match stipulation was announced: The bathroom hadn't been cleaned in nearly two weeks. Lawler's bathroom looked and smelled like a pig sty.

"Yuk!" Missy yelled, pinching her upturned nose. "There's *nothing* you can do, Jerry Lawler, that could compel me to clean this bathroom!" she squeaked in her typically annoying shrill whine. As she turned to leave, Lawler grabbed her by her shirttail,

pulled her back, and shoved the contract by which he won her services under her face. Missy had no choice.

"Clean it!" the King demanded. Hyatt, realizing there was no way out, picked up a toilet-scrubbing brush (the veteran serviceman in me hoped that Jerry would have the *panache* and style to make her clean the bathroom with a toothbrush) and got to work.

It was satisfying seeing Hyatt scrub a toilet. She's a high-society dame who has no idea what an honest day's work *really* is. She reaps great benefits from the mat world, while contributing nothing. Even Eddie Gilbert—with whom I've had professional differences—wrestles tirelessly, turning down no challengers. The same can be said for Lawler. But Hyatt is part of a disease that infects wrestling, and she could use a good dose of humility to learn her proper place in the mat world.

"Oh, Missy," Lawler instructed his servant, "we'll be out on the veranda. When you're done with the toilet, bring us some lunch. Nothing fancy, just broil up a few steaks, some vegetables. Then go down to the wine cellar and open a bottle of red Bordeaux, whatever year you think is best. And a bottle of beer for Matt."

As I'd expected, Missy was *not* a good cook. The steaks were charred to a leathery crisp. Lawler relaxed at poolside while Hyatt cooked, served, and cleared away our dishes.

The final stop of the day was "The King's" laundry room. Like the bathroom, everything was an utter mess. A complete cleaning was definitely necessary, and Missy was just the woman for the job. But since I had an afternoon plane to catch, I made for the door to say my goodbyes to my host.

"Wait, Matt, you can't leave *now*," Jerry said. "After she does my laundry, Missy's gonna wash and wax my car, then clean every

window in the house and polish every piece of silver—that's 12 place settings plus accessories! You won't want to miss it!" I didn't, but I had to go.

As I was leaving, I saw Missy daintily picking up piece after piece of filthy underwear, wincing in pain and touching them like they were radioactive waste. Although I was sad to go, I knew that this was the perfect ending to a perfect day. The frazzled look of defeat on Missy's aristocratic face will stay with me forever.

I hope the lesson she learned there will stay with her for as long. □

## TRIPLE DOME

(Continued from page 33)

somebody out there in that crowd rooting his butt off for me, and I wanted to win a prize for him. I figured maybe he was a Vietnam vet or maybe some blonde broad. You'd better believe that if she won that trip to Las Vegas, I was going with her."

The Texas Roundup was conducted similarly to the WWF's Royal Rumble. It started with two men, Sterling and Mike George, in the bottom ring. Every two minutes, another wrestler entered the ring. Also, every two minutes the trap doors between the rings opened for 30 seconds, giving the wrestlers the opportunity to move upward. The first man to reach the top ring was the winner.

"It was brutal," said Shaun Simpson, who took the worst beating in the match. Both Shaun and his brother Steve were battling on the second level when Shaun made a break for the top cage. As he tried to go through the gate, Tatum and Victory grabbed him. Shaun fell and badly injured his knee, rendering him immobile. Meanwhile, Casey took advantage of the situation to go from the first level to the



third level and win the match. Steve spent the rest of the match protecting Shaun, who would have to be carried out on a stretcher.

"If I left him there, he was helpless," said Steve. "You know, all you had to do was look in these guys' eyes to know that they were ready to kill anyone. There's a strange effect that a cage has on wrestlers, and three cages makes it even worse. It's the size of the cages, too. It's almost claustrophobic in that middle cage."

And more like a broom closet in the top cage, as Michael Hayes and Terry Gordy found out in a one-on-one bloodfest held in the Triple Dome of Terror prior to the Texas Roundup. The match began in the top cage; the first man out of the bottom cage, or able to pin his opponent, was declared a winner.

As expected, the match between the two warring Freebirds was an exercise in violence. Hayes was knocked down to the second level and Gordy tried to ram him into the steel cage. Hayes and Gordy brawled on the second level before Hayes climbed down to the bottom level. By the time they reached the bottom cage, both men were bloody and exhausted.

At that point, Iceman Parsons, Buddy Roberts, and Angel of Death arrived on the scene. Roberts threw powder in Hayes' eyes and Gordy pulled out his Oriental spike and

struck a blow to Hayes' head. A bloodied Hayes fell to the mat, where he was easily pinned by Gordy. Parsons, Angel, and Roberts then entered the cage and handed Gordy a pair of scissors. But Gordy decided not to cut Hayes' hair and got into a brief brawl with Angel.

Roberts attacked Gordy and Gordy knocked down Angel. Finally, Gordy knocked out Roberts, grabbed the scissors, and started cutting Buddy's hair. Angel and Iceman double-teamed Gordy, but the Simpson brothers ran out to save him. Then Hayes woke up and saw Gordy lying on the mat. Hayes was prepared to cut Gordy's hair, but the Simpsons explained to him what had happened.

"When I got up, I was in a daze," Hayes explained. "My head had been bashed into those cages so many times that I didn't know if I was in the top or the bottom—or even if I was still in Texas! I saw Terry lying there and my first instinct was, 'Go for him!' I had no idea what just happened. But that's just the kind of thing that's going to happen in a match like this. The Triple Dome of Terror is the most out-of-control thing I've ever been involved in.

"People in wrestling talk about banning a clawhold or the piledriver from time to time," Hayes observed. Hell, man, if you wanna ban something, ban *that*." □

## ROCK 'N' ROLLS

(Continued from page 35)

me during a recent trip to Las Vegas. "I appreciate the support and the sentiment behind the petition, but we're in a position where we have to do what we have to do. Our years in the NWA were great; heck, we won the World belts four times, and I'm sure we could have won 'em four more. But there comes a time when you just have to make a change to avoid stagnation, you know what I mean?"

"I feel bad about the petition, too," Robert Gibson added. "The NWA fans were always great to us. They supported us in our tag title drives, they supported Rick in his drive for [Ric] Flair's World title, they supported us through thick and thin. I can't think of anything to say about the fans that isn't just great. But like Rick said, sometimes you've got to change, get a

(Continued on page 64)

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## ROCK 'N' ROLLS

(Continued from page 63)

breath of fresh air."

"That doesn't necessarily mean that we hate the NWA or the fans there," Morton said. "See, people tend to make that mistake, that when you leave one place for somewhere else, it's because you didn't like the place you left. That's not true at all, at least it's not true in our case. But what people have to understand is that change is good sometimes. In this case, I think change is going to do us a *lot* of good. And who knows—someday we may very well be back in the NWA for World title number five—don't count us out!"

In the meantime, NWA fans can thrill to another high-flying, fast-moving team in the form of Tommy Rogers and Bobby Fulton—The Fantastics.

"It's tough, I understand that there's a certain level of resentment that we've walked into," Rogers told me recently. "But we're wrestling better and harder than we have in years, and I think that's going to be evident to the fans."

"Absolutely," Fulton said. "Hey—Rick and Rob are a great team, I don't want to take anything away

from them. And I feel uncomfortable that people are comparing us to them. We shouldn't be compared. We're different teams with different styles, and I hope the fans recognize that. You know, me and Tommy wouldn't mind if Ricky and Rob came back—there's plenty of room here for all of us. Imagine some of the eight-man bouts we could have if we teamed with them against The Four Horsemen! Awesome!"

While Rogers and Fulton shun comparisons with Morton and Gibson, there will nevertheless continue to be comparisons; it's the nature of the fans and the nature of the sport to evaluate one man or team against another.

The petition coupons have been forwarded to the NWA, but no word has come down yet from the federation's offices as to whether serious overtures will be made to get the Express away from AWA rings and back in the NWA fold.

Meanwhile, NWA rings burn with the awe-inspiring action of Fantastics-Midnight Express bouts. And the AWA has gained about 30,000 devoted new fans. □

## FANTASTICS

(Continued from page 39)

we're ever gonna approach respectability as a tag team." In the background, I could hear Fulton whimpering and badgering Rogers to find out my response.

I told Rogers to call me back in a few days after I talked it over with Mama. I did mention to Mama that Rogers and Fulton had called, but right away I knew I wanted nothing to do with them. I still couldn't forgive them for stealing our World Class title a few years ago, and Mama agreed. Instead, I vowed to drive them from

the sport if they even got *close* to the NWA.

Well, Fulton called me back a few days later, and he openly wept over the phone lines. It was almost sad to hear a grown—well, half-grown—man cry like a newborn baby, but that didn't prevent me from calling him a pantywaisted scumbucket before I slammed down the phone. I'm sorry I did that, because Mama cut my allowance in half for a week because I swore.

The next day, I was out in front



of the house berating the gardener when a limousine pulled up to the curb. The rear passenger window slid down and a gloved hand emerged and threw something at us!

"Get down, Rolito!" I screamed heroically to the gardener while ducking behind a hedge. "This one's got my number on it!"

A brick sailed through our beautiful plate-glass front window as the limo screeched away. When I got back inside the house, there were shards of glass everywhere. Mama was furious and wanted to call the police. I figured I had better find that brick before we did anything. Sure enough, it had a note attached to it.

"CORNETE A DEAD MANAGER," it read, "YOU'RE BELTS ARE OURS." I knew it was from The Fantastics because they misspelled my name and used "you're" instead of the correct "your." What do you expect, though; Fulton and Eaton can count up to their combined I.Q. using two hands and one foot, and still have enough fingers left over to pick each other's noses.

Mama was frantic. She immediately fired Rolito (abusing the hired help is a proven way of eliminating stress), but I managed to calm her down. I promised that I would never let those pretty boys get our U.S. belts. I would gain revenge for what they did to us.

As far as I'm concerned, The Fanstatics *still* aren't champions. The only reason they hold the belts is because the NWA upheld a bogus pinfall.

It doesn't matter. I wouldn't touch Rogers and Fulton with a 10-foot pool net the day they made that phone call, and I'm not nearly finished with them. When I'm through, Stan and Bobby will again be U.S. champions.

As for The Fantastics ... well, I'm *still* looking for gardening help. □

## DEMOLITION

(Continued from page 41)

ring and held him off. Santana then went after Fuji, who threw his cane onto the mat. When the referee tried to break them up, Santana viciously tossed him aside. Meanwhile, Ax picked up the cane and smashed Martel across the neck, knocking him flat on his back. Smash covered Martel for the pin and the bewildered ref, who had no idea what happened, made the three-count.

So to answer the first part of the question: Ax and Smash are, by proper standards, fluke champions. But when judged by today's standards, Demolition is nothing out of the ordinary.

As for the second part of the question: Just because Demolition

might have been fluke champions doesn't mean that they won't have the belts for a long time. Why Saks, Peters, and Apter thought their cute little question made any sense at all is beyond me.

Let me put it this way: Nobody ever holds the WWF World tag team belts for a long time. No team has ever been champion for as long as two years, and the last five title reigns have lasted an average of about 200 days each. That's barely more than half a year. There's just too much competition in the WWF, and too many things can happen when four men are beating the stuffings out of each other in the middle of the ring. If

(Continued on page 66)

## VICTORY SPORTS PUZZLE

(Continued from page 45)

[illegible]



## DEMOLITION

(Continued from page 65)

Ax and Smash are champions to stay, they're bucking tradition.

But I think they can pass that 200-day average, simply because most tag teams win the belts while at the peak of their abilities, while Demolition is one of the most improved tag teams in wrestling and constantly getting better. When they first started teaming, Ax and Smash were an absolute joke. Because of their outfits and makeup, the obvious comparison was to The Road Warriors. But the truth was that they didn't compare. They *still* don't, but Ax and Smash are getting better. Much better.

They certainly have as much guts as Martel and Santana, and they also have a major size advantage. Add Mr. Fuji into the equation and it's going to be very hard to pin these men. The British Bulldogs are on their way down, Strike Force has lost its momentum, and The Hart Foundation is in disarray.

The odds are in their favor. I'm betting on Demolition. □

## RICK STEAMBOAT

(Continued from page 44)

**STEAMBOAT:** Well, I've got an agent out in Los Angeles, and we're looking to get into movies, do some commercials or some product endorsements, things of that nature. Basically, that's it, other than just being at home with my son and my wife and working at Steamboat's Gym here, which remains my own little "bread-and-butter," so to speak. The gym has been doing jam-up business, and we're looking to expand. Bonnie and I can live very comfortably off our income just from that.

**PETERS:** Since you've decided to leave wrestling, it makes looking back over your career very interest-

ing. You've held more than your share of titles, but what would you say is the thing you're most proud of?

**STEAMBOAT:** I've been a pro 12 years, and averaged about 300 matches per year, so I'm looking back at about 3,600 matches. I've held several different titles, both singles and tag team, but I'd have to say the proudest moment of my career was that match when I brought my boy into the ring. And it was my *last* match! Nothing really comes close to comparing with that.

**SMITH:** Your last title was the Intercontinental championship, which you lost to The Honky Tonk Man a short time after winning it from Randy Savage at WrestleMania III. Many people had predicted that you would hold the belt for quite a long time. In retrospect, how did you feel about losing that title?

**STEAMBOAT:** It was a great loss for me. I had put a lot of momentum into chasing Randy Savage for almost eight months, and it was a thrill to finally achieve my goal of winning the belt. And then, about eight weeks later, I lost it to Honky Tonk. The loss was a setback, but only a month and a half after that, my son came into the world. At that point, I knew where my priorities were. And I also knew that if I was still champion when my son came along, I probably would have lost it anyway due to my change of interest. After being on the road for 12 years, I became something of a homebody, and I wanted it that way. I did realize my obligation to my fans, but I gave them almost 12 years of wrestling. Something came into my life which changed my priorities.

**PETERS:** Will we ever see Rick Steamboat in the ring again?

**STEAMBOAT:** Yes, it is possible. But for the time being and for the immediate future, the answer is no. I feel very comfortable with the decision I made. I've had a great career. I was never insecure about my ability, and I was lucky enough to have the fans backing whatever I did. I never thought I couldn't get the job done. It's simply

time to move on.

**KUNTZMAN:** Most wrestling observers think your match with Savage at WrestleMania III was one of the greatest of modern times. For my money, it was a superb display of wrestling skill, and most people seem to agree. How do you react to that?

**STEAMBOAT:** I feel very good about it. We set a record in attendance by wrestling in front of 93,000 fans. You could've pumped the adrenaline out of my body and filled up two 18-wheeler tankers! I've wrestled in a coliseum filled up with 25,000 people, but it's nothing like being at the Silverdome in front of 93,000 people. The volume of those cheers was amazing. As I sit here talking to you now, I'm getting goosebumps all over my body. The victory was great, sure, but I think all the wrestlers on the card could not get over the type of thrill that night was. I'm sure the fans feel the same way.

**PETERS:** Did the fact that millions were watching on pay-per-view cable add to the excitement of the event?

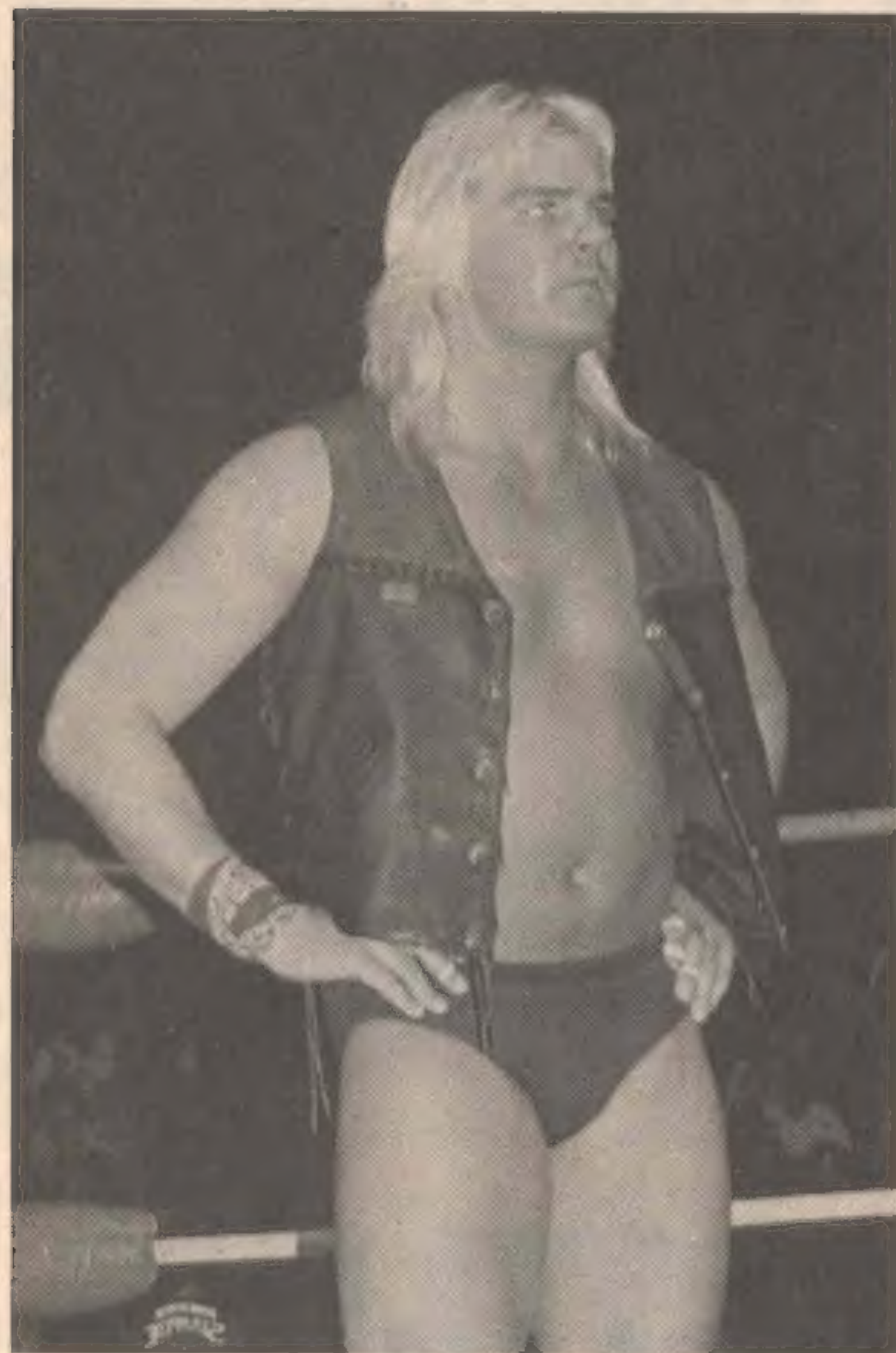
**STEAMBOAT:** I didn't even think about the pay-per-view, actually. I remember being taken out to the ring in that cart, and, my goodness, my heart was pounding to beat the band. I was pumping 7,000 rpms and this engine was ready! I don't think in another type of atmosphere my performance, or Randy Savage's for that matter, could have excelled any higher than that particular evening.

**KUNTZMAN:** I know that fans have meant a lot to you over the years. Is there anything you'd like to express to them since you're leaving the sport for a while?

**STEAMBOAT:** I'd really like to say thanks for their support. They gave me their support even during times when I wasn't a champion. Even then, they never let me down, and it always gave me a good feeling at the end of the night. That's the most that I could ask from any of the fans. I tip my hat to those people that stood by me, and boy, were there a lot of them! I couldn't have accomplished all I have without them. □



# Victory Sports Wrestling



Barry Windham

## TOP 10

- 1 RANDY SAVAGE**  
245, Sarasota, FL  
WWF World champion
- 2 RIC FLAIR**  
243, Minneapolis, MN  
NWA World champion
- 3 JERRY LAWLER**  
234, Memphis, TN  
AWA World champion
- 4 TED DiBIASE**  
247, Omaha, NB  
No. 2 contender: WWF title
- 5 LEX LUGER**  
268, Chicago, IL  
No. 2 contender: NWA title
- 6 STING**  
260, Venice Beach, CA  
No. 3 contender: NWA title
- 7 KERRY VON ERICH**  
260, Denton, TX  
World Class champion
- 8 BARRY WINDHAM**  
236, Sweetwater, TX  
U.S. heavyweight champion
- 9 THE HONKY TONK MAN**  
255, Memphis, TN  
WWF Intercontinental champion
- 10 MIKE ROTUNDO**  
245, Syracuse, NY  
Florida & NWA TV champion

## TAG TEAMS

- 1 TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON**  
Combined weight: 484 pounds  
NWA World tag team champions
- 2 DEMOLITION**  
Combined weight: 585 pounds  
WWF World tag team champions
- 3 THE ROAD WARRIORS**  
Combined weight: 567 pounds  
No. 1 contenders: NWA tag team title
- 4 THE FANTASTICS**  
Combined weight: 462 pounds  
U.S. tag team champions
- 5 BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE**  
Combined weight: 453 pounds  
No. 1 contenders: U.S. tag team title
- 6 PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND**  
Combined weight: 456 pounds  
AWA World tag team champions
- 7 THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**  
Combined weight: 453 pounds  
No. 2 contenders: U.S. tag team title
- 8 WARLORD & BARBARIAN**  
Combined weight: 655 pounds  
No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title
- 9 THE BRITISH BULLDOGS**  
Combined weight: 461 pounds  
No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title
- 10 JOHN TATUM & JACK VICTORY**  
Combined weight: 466 pounds  
WCCW Texas & Wild West tag team champions

## NWA

**World Champion:**  
**RIC FLAIR**

243, Minneapolis, MN

- 1—BARRY WINDHAM**  
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 2—LEX LUGER**  
268, Chicago, IL
- 3—DUSTY RHODES**  
302, Austin, TX
- 4—STING**  
260, Venice Beach, CA
- 5—STEVE WILLIAMS**  
265, Norman, OK
- 6—AL PEREZ**  
238, Tampa, FL
- 7—NIKITA KOLOFF**  
275, Moscow, Russia
- 8—MIKE ROTUNDO**  
245, Syracuse, NY
- 9—LARRY ZBYSZKO**  
248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 10—JIM GARVIN**  
235, Tampa, FL

## WWF

**World Champion:**  
**RANDY SAVAGE**

245, Sarasota, FL

- 1—THE HONKY TONK MAN**  
255, Memphis, TN
- 2—TED DiBIASE**  
247, Omaha, NB
- 3—ANDRE THE GIANT**  
497, Grenoble, France
- 4—HACKSAW DUGGAN**  
280, Glens Falls, NY
- 5—BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**  
273, San Francisco, CA
- 6—RICK RUDE**  
246, Robbinsdale, MN
- 7—JAKE ROBERTS**  
246, Stone Mountain, GA
- 8—THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR**  
280, Queens, NY
- 9—DON MURACO**  
274, Sunset Beach, HI
- 10—GREG VALENTINE**  
243, Seattle, WA

## AWA

**World Champion:**  
**JERRY LAWLER**

234, Memphis, TN

- 1—CURT HENNIG**  
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—GREG GAGNE**  
220, Robbinsdale, MN
- 3—SOLDAT USTINOV**  
265, Moscow, Russia
- 4—WAHOO McDANIEL**  
280, Midland, TX
- 5—EDDIE GILBERT**  
222, Lexington, TN
- 6—PHIL HICKERSON**  
257, Jackson, TN
- 7—JEFF JARRETT**  
200, Hendersonville, TN
- 8—MANNY FERNANDEZ**  
245, El Paso, TX
- 9—TEIJO KHAN**  
265, Singapore
- 10—BARON VON RASCHKE**  
271, Berlin, Germany

## WORLD CLASS

**World Class Champion:**  
**KERRY VON ERICH**

260, Denton, TX

- 1—KEVIN VON ERICH**  
235, Denton, TX
- 2—ICEMAN PARSONS**  
245, St. Louis, MO
- 3—THE GREAT SAMU**  
261, Samoa
- 4—ERIC EMBRY**  
225, Lexington, KY
- 5—KAMALA**  
360, Uganda
- 6—BUDDY ROBERTS**  
247, Del City, OK
- 7—MICHAEL HAYES**  
255, Marietta, GA
- 8—STEVE CASEY**  
230, San Antonio, TX
- 9—MISSING LINK**  
273, parts unknown
- 10—BILL IRWIN**  
250, Duluth, MN



# OFFICIAL RATINGS



Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.

## MOST POPULAR

- 1 RANDY SAVAGE**  
245, Sarasota, FL  
Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular
- 2 STING**  
260, Venice Beach, CA  
Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular
- 3 LEX LUGER**  
268, Chicago, IL  
Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular
- 4 HACKSAW DUGGAN**  
280, Glens Falls, NY  
Last issue: No. 9 Most Popular
- 5 DUSTY RHODES**  
302, Austin, TX  
Last issue: unrated
- 6 JERRY LAWLER**  
234, Memphis, TN  
Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular
- 7 KERRY VON ERICH**  
260, Denton, TX  
Last issue: No. 5 Most Popular
- 8 THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR**  
280, Queens, NY  
Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular
- 9 BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**  
273, San Francisco, CA  
Last issue: unrated
- 10 KEVIN VON ERICH**  
235, Denton, TX  
Last issue: unrated

## MOST HATED

- 1 ANDRE THE GIANT**  
497, Grenoble, France  
Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated
- 2 BARRY WINDHAM**  
236, Sweetwater, TX  
Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular
- 3 RIC FLAIR**  
243, Minneapolis, MN  
Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated
- 4 TED DIBIASE**  
247, Omaha, NB  
Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated
- 5 THE HONKY TONK MAN**  
255, Memphis, TN  
Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated
- 6 RICK RUDE**  
246, Robbinsdale, MN  
Last issue: unrated
- 7 EDDIE GILBERT**  
222, Lexington, TN  
Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated
- 8 CURT HENNIG**  
235, Minneapolis, MN  
Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated
- 9 ROBERT FULLER**  
238, Dyresburg, TN  
Last issue: unrated
- 10 MAKHAN SINGH**  
380, Saginaw, MI  
Last issue: unrated

For period ended July 7, 1988

## CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past five issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past five issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 50 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport. Note that because this is a quarterly magazine, the time covered by these ratings is twice as long as our monthlys.

### SINGLES

- 1—RIC FLAIR .....47 points
- 2—RANDY SAVAGE .....32 points
- 3—HULK HOGAN .....31 points
- 4—LEX LUGER .....27 points
- 5—BARRY WINDHAM .....20 points

### TAG TEAMS

- 1—THE ROAD WARRIORS .....48 points
- 2—BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE .....34 points
- 3—TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON ...32 points
- 4—THE HART FOUNDATION .....24 points
- 5—R 'N' R EXPRESS/DEMOLITION .....17 points

## STAMPEDE

North American Champion:  
**MAKHAN SINGH**

380, Saginaw, MI

- 1—JOHNNY SMITH  
235, Manchester, England
- 2—CHRIS BENOIT  
218, Edmonton, Alberta
- 3—STEVE DISALVO  
298, Boston, MA
- 4—KERRY BROWN  
225, Kansas City, MO
- 5—JASON THE TERRIBLE  
270, parts unknown
- 6—STEVE BLACKMAN  
250, Pittsburgh, PA
- 7—BRUCE HART  
211, Calgary, Alberta
- 8—CUBAN ASSASSIN  
236, Cuba
- 9—JERRY MORROW  
235, Martinique
- 10—GAMA SINGH  
220, Karachi, Pakistan

## CWA

CWA Champion:  
**PHIL HICKERSON**

257, Jackson, TN

- 1—MAX PAIN  
350, Iowa City, IA
- 2—BRICKHOUSE BROWN  
225, Winter Haven, FL
- 3—CURT HENNIG  
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 4—ROBERT FULLER  
238, Dyresburg, TN
- 5—SCOTT STEINER  
235, Detroit, MI
- 6—GARY YOUNG  
240, Houston, TX
- 7—JIMMY GOLDEN  
235, Montgomery, AL
- 8—BILLY TRAVIS  
218, Houston, TX
- 9—JEFF JARRETT  
200, Hendersonville, TN
- 10—DOUG FURNAS  
265, Commerce, OK

## CONTINENTAL

Continental Champion:  
**TITLE VACANT**

To be filled in upcoming tourney

- 1—EDDIE GILBERT  
222, Lexington, TN
- 2—LORD HUMONGOUS  
325, parts unknown
- 3—AUSTIN IDOL  
240, Las Vegas, NV
- 4—TOM PRITCHARD  
220, Houston, TX
- 5—TONY ANTHONY  
235, Bucksnorth, TN
- 6—MR. OLYMPIA  
242, parts unknown
- 7—DAN DAVIS  
238, Nashville, TN
- 8—TOMMY RICH  
248, Hendersonville, TN
- 9—KEN WAYNE  
208, Memphis, TN
- 10—DETROIT DEMOLITION  
310, Detroit, MI

## WOMEN

1—**SHERRI MARTEL**

WWF World women's champion

2—**MISTY BLUE SIMMES**

NWA U.S. women's champion

3—**WENDI RICHTER**

WWC women's champion

4—**MADUSA MICELI**

AWA World women's champion

5—**HEIDI LEE MORGAN**

No. 1 contender to AWA title

6—**BRANDI MAE**

No. 2 contender to AWA title

7—**ROCKIN' ROBIN**

No. 1 contender to WWF title

8—**LINDA DALLAS**

No. 1 contender to U.S. title

9—**VELVET McINTYRE**

No. 2 contender to WWF title

10—**DEBBIE COMBS**

No. 3 contender to AWA title



# RATINGS ANALYSIS

**This column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 135 wrestlers in 12 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.**

**A new number one!** For the first time since winning the WWF World championship on March 27 at WrestleMania IV, Randy Savage has moved into the top spot in our Top 10 ratings, displacing NWA World champion Ric Flair. Flair dropped to number two while AWA World champion Jerry Lawler remains in the third spot.



*Ted DiBiase*

The reasons for the change are quite simple. As champion, Savage has embarked on a heavy schedule of title defenses. He has rarely relied on outside interference, despite the tactics of top contender Ted DiBiase. And Savage's victory in a steel cage match at Madison Square Garden in late June strengthened his position as champion.

Meanwhile, Flair continues—more than ever!—to rely on the interference of J.J. Dillon and The Four Horsemen to retain his belt. Even more important, Flair has been defending his belt less than ever. He was scheduled for only one title defense—July 10 against Lex Luger in Baltimore—during the entire Great American Bash. Two years ago, Flair defended the title almost every night during the Bash.

Top 10 ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of the wrestlers. Savage's credentials are impeccable in each category. He is a worthy number one.

**You'd think the people would have had enough of silly ratings!** But we're bringing them back again. Almost two years ago, we asked you to come up with your own offbeat ratings category, compile a set of ratings, and send it to "Ratings Analysis." The response was overwhelming. Readers rated the "10 Most Obnoxious Wrestlers," the "10 Wrestlers Who Had Better Retire Before They Get Crippled," "10 Beautiful Blonds Of Wrestling," "Wrestlers' Foreheads," "Best Bellybuttons In The WWF," "Couples Of Wrestling," and the "Most Devastating Finishing Maneuvers." It was interesting and a lot of fun.

So we're asking you again to come up with some new categories (or even update the old ones) and send them to us at Victory Sports Wrestling. If it's interesting or funny—or hopefully both!—we'll print it in a future installment.

Just to get things rolling, we've decided to print an unusual, but interesting, off-beat ratings category sent in by Robert G. Gruber of Newburgh, New York. Robert ranked the top 10 world champions of all time and writes, "As you go down the list, you will see that Hulk Hogan didn't even get into my

ratings. Even though Hogan held the WWF title for 4½ years, he has no scientific skills whatsoever."

## ALL-TIME TOP 10 WORLD CHAMPIONS

- 1—LOU THESZ  
*Six-time NWA champ 1937-66*
- 2—BRUNO SAMMARTINO  
*Two-time WWF champ 1963-77*
- 3—VERNE GAGNE  
*Nine-time AWA champ 1960-80*
- 4—HARLEY RACE  
*Seven-time NWA champ 1973-83*
- 5—BOB BACKLUND  
*WWF champ 1978-83*
- 6—GENE KINISKI  
*NWA champ 1966-69; AWA champ 1961*
- 7—DORY FUNK JR.  
*NWA champ 1969-73*
- 8—JACK BRISCO  
*Two-time NWA champ 1973-74*
- 9—RIC FLAIR  
*Five-time NWA champ 1981-present*
- 10—RICK MARTEL  
*AWA champ 1984-85*

**Here they come again!** For the second time since instituting a revolving ratings category, women take the center stage this issue. Several of these women—WWF champ Sherri Martel, NWA U.S. champ Misty Blue Simmes, and WWC champ



*Madusa Miceli*

Wendi Richter—have retained their belts since the last time we rated them. But there have been plenty of changes in the AWA. Madusa Miceli won the vacant women's title and is now trying to hold off challenges from Heidi Lee Morgan and Brandi Mae. Madusa's tag team partner, Debbie Combs, could also pose a challenge in the near future. Meanwhile, "Sensational" Sherri appears to have a stranglehold on the WWF belt. The Fabulous Moolah is no longer wrestling, while Rockin' Robin and Velvet McIntyre have posed only minor threats to Martel's title.

**Send us your criticism, your comments, your questions ...** and your silly ratings categories. The address for mail is: "Ratings Analysis" c/o Victory Sports Wrestling; Box 48; Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □